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ORIENTAL TALES,

&c.

THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE.

THERE was formerly a rich merchant, who carried on a great trade with several distant cities. One day he set out to travel from his place of residence to Balsora, and, as he was forced to pass a great desert, where it was impossible to procure any food, he carried with him some provisions, to refresh himself on his journey. For three days he travelled pleasantly, but on the fourth he was so much incommoded by the heat of the sun and the reflection of that heat from the earth, that he quitted the direct road, to rest himself under the shade of some tall trees that he saw at a distance. There he found, at the foot of a great walnut-tree, a beautiful fountain of very clear running water. He alighted, tied his horse to the branch of a tree, and, taking some biscuits and dates out of his portmanteau, sat down by the side of the fountain, and,

without thinking any harm, threw the shells of his dates on each side of him, as he ate the kernels. He had scarcely finished his meal when he saw a frightful genie appear. He was white with age and of a monstrous size, and held in his hand an enormous cimiter. Advancing towards the merchant, he spoke to him in a terrible voice, saying, "Rise up, that I may kill thee, as thou hast killed my son." He accompanied these threatening words, with a horrible cry, which alarmed the merchant still more than his hideous appearance. At last he answered the genie, trembling, "Alas! my good lord, what have I done that you should wish to take away my life."

"Did I not tell you that you had killed my son," replied the genie.

"How is it possible," cried the merchant, "for me to have killed your son, when I don't know him. I never even saw him in all my life."

"That may be true," replied the genie; "nevertheless you have killed him. Have you not been eating dates? and, as you ate them, did you not carelessly throw about the shells?"

"I do not deny that I did so," said the merchant, "and where is the harm of throwing away the shell, when one has eaten the kernel?"

"Wretch!" answered the genie, "do you ask where is the harm? My son was passing invisibly at the time, and you threw one of your nut-shells into his eye, which killed him! Therefore you shall die."

"Oh, my lord, pardon me," cried the merchant.

"I will not pardon you," answered the genie. "Is it not just to kill him that has killed another?"

"Certainly," said the merchant, "if it was done purposely; but, if I have killed your son, it was done innocently: therefore I hope you will pardon me, and suffer me to live."

"No," replied the genie, "you shall surely die, since you were the cause of my son's death."

Then, taking the merchant by the arm, he threw him on the ground, and raised his cimiter to cut off his head.

When the poor man saw that the genie was about to slay him, he bewailed his hard fate in the most moving terms. "For the sake of Allah," he cried, "hold your hand. Allow me but time to bid farewell to my wife and children, and to divide my estate among them, that they may not go to law with one another after my death; and, when I have done so, I swear to come back to this place, and submit myself to your mercy."

"What time do you demand?" said the genie, who was somewhat moved by the man's lamentations.

"I ask a year," replied the merchant; "I cannot settle my affairs, and prepare myself to die, in less time. If you will grant me the respite I ask, I promise to return here this day twelvemonth, and deliver myself into your hands."

"Do you call on Heaven to witness this promise," said the genie.

"I do," replied the merchant; "I swear, by all that is sacred, to meet you at this place when a year has elapsed."

Upon this the genie vanished into the air, and left the merchant standing alone by the fountain.

When the merchant had a little recovered from his fright, he mounted his horse and returned to his home. His wife and children received him with great joy, but, instead of returning their caresses, he began to weep bitterly. This conduct terrified his wife and family, and they inquired with much alarm what ailed him.

"Alas!" replied the merchant, "you will very soon lose me; I have but one year to live."

He then told them all that had passed between him and the genie.

When they heard that he was bound by a fatal oath to return, to receive death from the hands of the cruel genie, they all began to weep, and made the house resound with their lamentations.

In a little time the merchant began to settle his affairs. He gave liberal alms to the poor, divided his estates among his wife and children, and set his slaves at liberty. At last the year expired, and he bade a sorrowful adieu to his family, and, hastening out of hearing of their cries and lamentations, he proceeded on his journey, being resolved to fulfil his oath in every particular.

In three days he arrived at the fountain, a little while before the time appointed. He alighted and sat down under the shade of the walnut-tree. While he was waiting in great suspense for the coming of the genie, he saw a venerable old man, leading two dogs, approach the place where he sat. He saluted the merchant very courteously, and said to him,—

"Friend, may I ask you why you are tarrying in this desert place? It is haunted by evil spirits, and therefore you cannot be safe. To look upon these fine trees, and this clear fountain, one would think it a delightful resting-place; but it is shunned by every one who is acquainted with its dangers."

The merchant immediately satisfied his curiosity by relating to him the reasons which obliged him to be there.

"This is a very surprising adventure," said the stranger; "however, I will be witness of your interview with the genie."

"Are you not afraid of some ill consequence," replied the merchant.

"No," said the stranger, "I am under very powerful protection; therefore, the genie dares not harm me, and I will await his coming."

So saying, he seated himself at the foot of the tree by the side of the merchant.

In a few minutes they perceived in the plain a dark vapour, like a cloud of dust raised by a whirlwind, advancing towards them. As it approached nearer, the vapour dissolved, and the genie appeared before them. He immediately seized the merchant by the arm, and said, in a terrible voice, "Rise up, that I may slay thee, since thou hast killed my son!"

When the old man who led the two dogs saw that the genie was about to kill the merchant, he threw himself at the feet of the monster, and said to him,—

"Prince of genies, I humbly request that you

will suspend your anger, and listen to me. I will tell you the history of my life, and of the two dogs you see with me, and, if you should think it more wonderful than the adventure of the merchant you are going to kill, I hope you will pardon the unfortunate man."

The genie took some time to consider what he should do, but, being very fond of hearing wonderful stories, he at last agreed to the proposal; and the old man began his tale.

THE STORY OF

THE OLD MAN AND THE TWO DOGS.

GREAT prince of genies, you must know that these two dogs are my brothers. Our father at his death left to each of us one thousand sequins; with this sum we all entered into trade, and became merchants. In a little time my eldest brother grew tired of his shop; he sold all he had, and joined a caravan, with the intention of trading to foreign countries.

After he had been absent some years, a poor man, who looked so wretched that I thought he meant to ask alms, entered my shop. I said to

him, " God help you," and offered him some small pieces of money.

" Is it possible," said he, " that you don't know me." Upon this I closely examined his features, and knew him to be my brother. " Alas!" cried I, " how should I know you in this deplorable condition?" I then began to ask him questions concerning his travels and his success in trade.

" I have met with nothing but misfortunes since I left you:" said he, " I have lost all my property, and am reduced to the greatest poverty, as you may plainly see by the miserable state I am in at present."

I immediately shut up my shop, and took my brother home to my house, where I gave him proper refreshments, and clothed him with the best suit of clothes I had. I then examined my books, and, finding that I had doubled my stock and possessed two thousand sequins, I gave him one half of my property, which he joyfully accepted, and hired a shop and entered into trade.

Some time after, my second brother wished to travel; and, in spite of all my remonstrances, he sold his goods and joined a caravan. In two years he came back as poor as his elder brother. Meanwhile I had gained another thousand sequins,

which I presented to my destitute brother: he furnished a shop, and began to trade as before.

About a year after, both my brothers came to me, and tried to persuade me to join them in a trading voyage. I immediately rejected the proposal, and represented to them the bad success they had met with in their travels: but I could not prevail on them to give up the idea. For five years they continued their solicitations, and overcame me at last. But, when we began to make preparations for our voyage, I found they were again impoverished, for they had spent every farthing of the money I had given them. I did not upbraid them for their improvidence, but, having increased my capital to six thousand sequins, I took one thousand for myself, and gave a thousand to each of my brothers, and buried the remainder in a corner of my house, that I might not be destitute if we should meet with bad success in our travels. We bought our goods and freighted a vessel, and left our country with a prosperous wind.

I will not fatigue you with a description of our voyage: it is sufficient to say that my brothers were both prosperous in their trade, and, for my part, I was so very successful, that every thing I touched seemed to turn to gold.

We were preparing to embark in order to return home, when I met on the sea-beach a lady poorly dressed, but very handsome. She approached me, and told me that she was very desirous of leaving that country, but that her poverty was so great, she could not pay for her passage; she then requested me to take her on board my ship, out of charity. I was touched with compassion, and granted her request, and, becoming acquainted with her, I was so much pleased with her amiable disposition, that I offered her my hand, and she became my wife before we left the port.

During my voyage homewards, I found so many good qualities in my wife, that I loved her more and more every day. In the meantime my brothers were so ungrateful as to repine at my prosperity, and they carried their malignant envy so far as to attempt to murder me. One night, when we were both sleeping in security, they took my wife and myself, and plunged us into the sea.

My wife was a very powerful fairy; therefore, genie, you are well aware that she could not be drowned; but it is certain that I should have perished without her assistance. In an instant she caused me to be raised from the water, and transported to a neighbouring island.

"You see, my dear husband," said she, "that I have rewarded your kindness to me, by saving your life. I am a fairy, and, wishing to try your goodness of heart, I presented myself before you, in the disguise in which you saw me on the sea-beach. You have since treated me so generously that I am delighted with having an opportunity of showing you how much I love you. But as for those ungrateful traitors, your brothers, I will fly after their ship and sink them to the bottom of the sea."

"My dear lady," I replied, "for the love of Allah, moderate your anger, and remember that, however unworthy they may be, they are still my brothers, and consider that we are enjoined to do good for evil."

The fairy was somewhat calmed by these words, and promised that she would not take the lives of my brothers. She then transported me in a moment to my own country, and set me down on a flat terrace on the roof of my house, and then disappeared. I went down and dug up my three thousand sequins, and opened the doors. Directly the door was opened, I was surprised to see two black dogs, which approached me in a very sub-

missive manner. Their demeanour was so extraordinary that I was lost in astonishment, when the fairy appeared before me.

"Husband," she said, "do not be surprised at seeing these dogs enter your house: they are your brothers."

I was strangely disturbed at these words, and asked her how they were thus transformed.

"I gave one of my sisters orders to execute my vengeance," she replied, "and at the same time she conveyed all your goods that were in the ship into your warehouse in this city. As to your brothers, I have condemned them to remain five years in the shape of dogs. Their wicked ingratitude to you well deserves such a punishment."

She then told me that she was forced to be absent from me during five years, but appointed me to meet her in this place at the end of that time.

The five years are now expired; and I have travelled to this spot in quest of her. I hope, when we meet, that she will restore my brothers to their former shape, and return and live happily with me.

This is my history, O prince of genies, and I trust it has answered your expectations.

"I own that it is very extraordinary," replied the genie, "and therefore I will keep my promise, and pardon the crime this man has committed."

The genie then disappeared, and the merchant, after warmly thanking his deliverer, returned to his home, where he ended his days in peace.

THE PUNISHMENT OF INGRATITUDE.

On the shores of the Caspian Sea, reigned a king, whose subjects were originally a colony from Greece.

This prince was greatly afflicted with the leprosy, and his physicians had in vain attempted his cure. When his recovery was considered as entirely hopeless, there arrived at his court a celebrated physician, who was called Douban.

When this learned man was informed of the king's distemper, he presented himself before him and said, "I have heard that your majesty's physicians have failed to cure you of the leprosy; but, if you will honour me by putting yourself under my care, I will engage to restore your health, without troubling you to take medicine or use external applications."

The Grecian king listened to this discourse with great attention, and answered,—

"If you fulfil your promise, I will load you with riches and preferments, and make you my chief favourite."

The next morning the physician returned to court, and presented to the king a mallet, hollow within and filled with drugs, and a ball prepared in the same manner.

"Your majesty will please to use this ball and mallet, when you exercise yourself by playing at the mall. When the drugs which I have enclosed in the handle of the mallet become heated with your hand, the medicine will have had its proper effect, and you must directly go into the bath, and from thence to bed, and you will rise up perfectly cured."

Charmed with so easy and pleasant a remedy, the Grecian king began directly to play at the mall; he used the medicated ball and mallet, and followed the physician's directions in every particular. When he rose the next morning, he was greatly surprised to find that his skin was as fair and clear as that of an infant, and that his leprosy had entirely left him.

He immediately attired himself in all his royal magnificence, and held a divan, where he showed himself to his subjects perfectly restored to health, and presented the physician Douban to them as a man to whom he was under the greatest obligations. He gave him a rich robe, placed a chain

of precious jewels round his neck, and appointed him a pension of a thousand sequins a month. He commanded all his courtiers to show him the greatest respect, and made him dine at his own table in public.

All these favours greatly excited the envy and jealousy of the king's principal vizier, who was a man of a very wicked disposition. He considered a long time how he could ruin Douban, and, having at last contrived a scheme, he went to the king and requested a private audience, as he had something of the greatest moment to communicate to him.

"Sire," said he, "I have just received certain intelligence that this physician, Douban, on whom your majesty is pleased to lavish so many benefits, is a traitor in his heart; and, instigated by your enemies, he has travelled from the heart of Greece, his native country, on purpose to destroy you."

"You cannot expect me, vizier," replied the king, "to believe any thing so absurd. If Douban has a design on my life, why did he cure me? If he wished me to die, he needed only to have left me to my disease. I perceive that his great virtue has excited your envy, but do not think that I will suffer myself to be prejudiced against a man to whom I owe so much. If I was to listen to your

calumnies, and put Douban to death, I should repent when it was too late, as the man did who killed his parrot."

"I pray your majesty to pardon my boldness," said the vizier, "but I should like much to hear you relate the story to which you allude." The king immediately complied with his request, and told him the story of "The Husband and his Parrot."

A certain man had a fair wife, whom he loved so dearly that he could scarcely allow her to be a moment out of his sight.

One day a friend made him a present of a parrot, which not only spoke very well, but could give a good account of every thing he saw done in his presence. He bought this parrot a very handsome cage, and took it home to his wife, and told her to put it in her apartment, and take great care of it, during a long journey that he was about to take.

At his return, he took care to ask his parrot to tell him every thing that had passed in his absence, and the bird informed him of some circumstances which caused him to upbraid his wife with

ill conduct. She thought, at first, that some of her slaves had betrayed her, but they all declared that they had been faithful, and that it was the parrot that told tales.

The wife then contrived a plan by which she thought she might remove her husband's jealousy, and be revenged on the parrot at the same time. The good man having occasion to take another journey, as soon as he was departed from home, she commanded one of her slaves, when it was dark, to turn a hand-mill under the parrot's cage; she ordered another to sprinkle water over him in the form of rain; and the third to take a mirror and a light, and now and then to flash the reflections of the candle from the glass, full before the parrot's eyes. The slaves spent the greatest part of the night in performing their mistress's commands, and acquitted themselves very dexterously.

The next morning the husband returned, and he directly began to examine the parrot, respecting all that had passed in his absence.

"Good master," answered the bird, "the thunder, lightning, and rain, so much annoyed me all night, that I was unable to attend to any thing else."

The husband, who knew that there had been

neither thunder, lightning, nor rain, in the night, imagined that every thing the parrot had told him before was equally false; and he was so enraged at its having spoken an untruth, that he took the poor bird out of the cage and killed it, by throwing it violently against the ground.

Some time after, his neighbours informed him of his wife's base conduct. He then found that the poor parrot had told him truth, and he bitterly repented having put him to death.

"And thus, vizier," continued the king, "should I repent, if I was to listen to the suggestions of your jealousy, and put to death the physician Douban."

"Great king," replied the vizier, "the death of a parrot was but a trifle, and so is the death of any private individual, compared to the preservation of a mighty monarch like yourself: besides, it would be much better to sacrifice the life of an innocent man than to let the guilty escape, or run any risk when a life so precious as your's is at stake. I assure you it is not envy that induces me to accuse this man, but zeal for your majesty's welfare. I have information which I can depend

upon, that this physician, after he has enriched himself by your bounty, means to destroy you as suddenly as he has cured you."

The last arguments of the vizier had great weight with his master, who, being a man of very weak intellect, had not firmness enough to persist in his first opinion, but easily imbibed the poison that the vizier instilled into his mind.

"It is certain," he replied, "that Douban can as easily take away my life by the smell of some of his drugs, as he could cure me by others. Whether his intentions are good or bad, I perceive that I am in constant danger from his great knowledge; what would you advise me to do?"

The vizier was rejoiced to find that he had worked his master into the temper he desired.

"Sire," said he, "the only way of preserving your life is to send for the physician Douban, and order his head to be struck off, directly he comes."

"I believe," replied the king, "we must take that measure, as the only means of securing myself against his arts."

He then sent one of his officers to summon the physician into his presence, who, not suspecting the king's cruel intentions, came in haste to the palace.

"Know you," said the king, as Douban entered his presence, "wherefore I sent for you?"

"No," replied the physician, "I wait till your majesty is pleased to inform me."

"I sent for you," said the king, "to rid myself of your treasons, by cutting off your head."

It is impossible to describe the astonishment of the physician, when he heard the ungrateful king condemn him to death.

"Why should your majesty wish to take away my life?" he said. "How have I offended you? what crime can I have committed?"

"I am informed from good authority," replied the king, "that you design to deprive me of my life; therefore I am resolved to prevent your traitorous intentions, by putting you instantly to death. Give the blow," said he to the executioner, and deliver me from a perfidious wretch, who came here only to assassinate me."

"Is it thus," said the physician, "that you reward me for curing you of a dreadful disease?"

The king refused to listen to his remonstrances, and a second time ordered the executioner to despatch him.

Douban pleaded again earnestly for his life, and represented to the monarch the base ingratitude of his conduct. "Ah! sire," continued he, "have

mercy on me, and Allah will prolong your days." —"No," replied the king, "I am determined to put you to death, lest you should poison me as artfully as you effected my cure."

The physician, being on his knees, with his eyes bound, ready to receive the fatal blow, addressed himself to the king once more:—

"Since your majesty will not revoke the sentence of death, I implore, as my last request, that you will permit me to return to my house for one day, that I may bid farewell to my family, and bequeath my books to those who are capable of understanding them. I have one book in particular, which I would wish to present to your majesty; it is well worthy of being laid up as a most precious deposit in your treasury."

"And why is this book so precious?" asked the monarch.

"Because," replied Douban, "it is capable of performing many prodigies. I will give you an instance of one of them: after I am beheaded, if you open the book and turn to the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left page, my head will answer in an audible voice any questions you may be pleased to ask."

The king immediately gave orders for the execution to be delayed, not from any feelings of re-

morse or mercy, but through an earnest desire of beholding so great a miracle; and the physician was permitted to return to his house under the care of a strong guard.

When the king was seated on his throne next day, and all his courtiers were placed round him, anxious to be witnesses of so wonderful a prodigy, the physician was brought into the royal presence.

He advanced to the foot of the throne, with a large book in his hand, and addressed these words to the king:—"After my death, if your majesty causes my head to be put in a basin, and placed on the cover of this book, the blood will cease to flow; you may then take away the book, and open it according to my directions, and my head will answer all your questions. "But," continued he, "permit me once more to implore your majesty's mercy: do not take away the life of an innocent man, for I protest to you I am guiltless of the crime laid to my charge."

"Your prayers are useless," replied the king; "whether you are innocent or guilty, I am resolved to take your life, that I may have the pleasure of hearing your head speak after your death."

The executioner then did his duty, and decapitated the physician Douban so dexterously, that his head fell into a basin that had been prepared for that purpose. No sooner was the basin placed on the cover of the book, than, to the great surprise of the beholders, the blood ceased flowing, and the head, opening its eyes, said to the king: "Now will your majesty be pleased to open the book."

The king took the book from under the basin (which was placed with the head on a stand before him), and began to turn over the leaves; but, finding that one leaf adhered to another (as if they had been slightly glued together), to enable him to turn them with more ease, he wetted his finger by putting it in his mouth. He did so till he came to the sixth page, where, finding nothing but blank paper, he said to the head:—"Physician, there is nothing written here."

"Turn over a few more pages," replied the head.

The king proceeded to turn the leaves, and continued to wet his finger by putting it in his mouth, till the poison, with which Douban had imbued each leaf, taking effect, he was suddenly seized

with strange pains, and, his eyesight failing him, he fell down in strong convulsions at the foot of his throne.

When the head saw that the ungrateful king had but a few moments to live, it said:—"Tyrant, see how princes are punished who abuse their authority, and destroy innocent men: sooner or later their cruelty always meets with a fitting reward."

When the head had spoken these words, it lost all the life it had left; and the king expired, leaving to futurity an example of the punishment of ingratitude.

THE OX AND THE ASS,

A FABLE.

THE language of animals was once known in the east by some few favoured persons. A rich merchant had received this gift from a fairy, which proved a source of great amusement to him, as he had a fine estate in the country, where he spent much of his time, attending to the discourse of various animals.

He had, in the same stall, an ox and an ass; and one day, as he sat near them, he heard the ox say to his companion,—"Sprightly, how I envy your happy lot. You are carefully rubbed down, and you have good corn and clean water. Your greatest business is to carry the merchant, our master, when he has any little journey to make to the city, and were it not for that you would be perfectly idle. I am treated in a very different manner. By daybreak I am fastened to the plough, where I am forced to work till night, and the labourer who guides me beats me continually. When I am brought home in the evening, they

give me nothing but dross beans, not even cleansed from sand and dirt; so, you see, I have great reason to complain of ill treatment."

The ass immediately replied, "Those who call you a stupid foolish kind of animal are, methinks, not much mistaken. All this ill usage is occasioned by your own cowardice and want of resolution; they would not treat you so vilely if you had as much courage as strength. When they come to fasten you to the stall, why don't you make resistance? Why don't you frighten them by bellowing aloud? In short, why don't you strike your foot against the ground, and but at them with your horns? Nature has furnished you with the means of defence, if you chose to make use of them. When they bring you sorry beans and bad straw, don't eat any; only smell them, and leave them. Follow this advice, and you will quickly find a change in your condition, for which you will thank me."

The ox was much pleased with these words, and owned that he was greatly obliged to the ass for his good counsel, which he promised to observe in every particular.

Next morning the labourer came and fastened the ox to the plough, and took him to his accus-

tomed employment; but he did his work as ill as he could, and was very restive and troublesome all day. In the evening, when the labourer released him from the yoke, and led him to fasten him to the stall, the malicious beast stamped with his foot, went backwards bellowing, and then ran at him, pushing with his horns. The labourer, finding that it was dangerous to contest with so vicious an animal, left him untied for the night; and the ox, pleased to find he had carried his point in his first attempt at resistance, resolved to follow the advice of the ass in every thing.

The next morning, when the labourer came, as usual, to take the ox to work, he was surprised to find the food he had given him the night before untouched, and the ox stretched on the ground, panting in a strange manner. He immediately believed that the beast was sick, and went and told his master that the ox was too ill to do any work.

The merchant perceived that the creature had followed the mischievous counsels of his companion, and determined to punish the ass for giving him such bad advice. He therefore ordered the labourer to put the ass to the plough instead of the ox, and to take good care that he should work

hard. The man obeyed him, and the ass was forced to till the ground all day, he tried many times to kick and be restive, but found that each time he got nothing by his stubbornness but a shower of blows. The heavy labour, to which he was unused, and the severe beating he had received for his ill tricks, exhausted his strength so much, that he could scarcely stand when he came back at night to his stall.

"Dear Sprightly," said the ox, the moment he returned, "I ought to thank you a thousand times for your excellent advice: I have had nothing to do all day; I have had plenty of good food and drink, and have passed my time in ease and comfort."

The ass was so vexed to find how much the ox had profited by his sufferings, that he could not answer him one word, but said to himself,—"Fool that I was to meddle with other people's concerns! What business was it of mine, if this stupid beast was hardly worked and coarsely fed; wherefore did I persuade him to rebel against our good master, who knows best what is good for him? I lived happily, I had all I could wish, and it is my own fault that I am reduced to this miserable plight. If I cannot find some means of

bettering my present condition, I am undone for ever."

So saying, he laid himself down in his stall to devise some plan to regain his former happiness.

The merchant, understanding that the ass had returned from work in a very lamentable state, was curious to know what passed between him and the ox; therefore, after supper, he went out by moonlight, and sat down in his usual place. In a little time he heard the ass say to the ox,—"Comrade, tell me, I pray, what you intend to do to-morrow, when the labourer brings you food?"

"I will continue to do what you taught me," said the ox: "I will threaten him with my horns, and feign myself sick and ready to die."

"Beware of that," replied the ass: "it will ruin you; for, as I came home to-night, I heard our master say something that makes me tremble for you."

"Alas! what did you hear," said the ox, "my dear Sprightly? I beseech you, hide nothing from me."

"Our master," replied the ass, "used these words to the labourer:—'Since the ox does not eat, and is not able to work, I will have him killed

to-morrow: his skin will be of use to us, so you must send that to the currier to be dressed, but we will give his flesh as alms to the poor; therefore, don't fail, but send for the butcher.' "

The ox was so much troubled when he heard these tidings, that he bellowed aloud for fear, and the merchant, who listened very attentively to the discourse, could not help laughing at his terror, and at the fine story the ass had invented.

" Oh! Sprightly, my good friend," said the ox, when he had a little recovered from his fright, " do advise me what I am to do, or I shall certainly lose my life to-morrow."

" The best thing you can do," replied the ass, " is to begin to eat your food with a good appetite directly the labourer puts it before you; our master will then think you are better, and will doubtlessly recall his orders for killing you."

This discourse had the effect the ass designed. The ox ate his food very peaceably, and submitted to the yoke without resistance; and the ass resumed his former occupation of carrying his good master to the city, instead of slaving at the plough. He forebore, for the future, to give bad advice, since he found that evil counsels often cause mischief to the adviser.

THE FORTY THIEVES.

In a large town, on the borders of Persia, lived two brothers, whose fortunes were very different. Ali Baba, the eldest, was miserably poor, and earned his bread by the laborious employment of a wood-cutter; while Cassim, the youngest, who had married a rich widow, lived at his ease, and was one of the richest merchants in the town. Though Cassim possessed such great abundance, he forgot the name of a brother, and suffered Ali Baba and his distressed family to remain in the most abject poverty, without rendering them the least assistance.

One day Ali Baba went, as usual, with three asses to the neighbouring forest, to bring home some wood to sell. He had just cut faggots enough to load his asses, when he perceived through the trees a large party of horsemen advancing towards him. Ali Baba felt some alarm, thinking they might be thieves; so, letting his asses wander about as they pleased, he hid himself by climbing into a large tree, which was

thickly covered with leaves. This tree stood at the foot of a rock so steep and high as to be perfectly inaccessible.

The troop of horsemen, who were all well mounted and armed, came to the foot of the rock, and alighted from their steeds. Ali Baba counted forty of them, and knew by their air and equipment that they were robbers. They tied their horses to the neighbouring trees, and followed a man who, from his superior deportment, appeared to be their captain. This person led them under the tree in which Ali Baba was hid, and, approaching the rock, went behind some bushes, and pronounced, in a loud voice, "Open, Sesame!" (which is the name of a species of grain.) At these words, a door in the rock flew open, and the captain entered, followed by all his troop. When they were in the rock, the door shut after them.

They stayed some time in this cave. At last the door opened again, and the captain appeared. When all his men had left the place, he commanded the cave to close again, by saying, "Shut, Sesame!" The robbers then mounted their horses, and returned by the way they came. Ali Baba sat patiently on his tree, till the troop

had been long out of sight; and then, being desirous of knowing whether the cave would unclose at his command, he descended from his tree, and pronounced the words, "Open, Sesame!" In a moment the door flew wide open.

Ali Baba, who had expected to see a dark dismal place, was much surprised to find the interior of the rock spacious and airy, and neatly cut into the form of a dome, which received light from an opening made in the top. Here were stored up all sorts of provisions, rich bales of merchandise, and immense quantities of gold and silver, in great bags, piled one on the other. This sight made him suppose (what was actually the fact) that this cave had been possessed, not only years, but ages, by robbers who succeeded one another, and had here deposited their spoils.

The moment Ali Baba entered the cave, the door shut; but he was not alarmed, as he knew the secret by which he could unclose it again. After he had examined the riches of the place, he commanded the door to open, and went out to seek his asses, which had wandered to some distance. When they were found, he loaded them with as many bags of gold as they could carry, and then covered over the treasure with

green boughs. After ordering the door to close, he hastened back to the town.

When he arrived at home, he informed his wife of this adventure, after charging her to secresy. He then brought in the bags of gold, and emptied them before her; and they formed such a heap of treasure as dazzled her eyes. The poor woman directly began to count the pieces of money, that she might know the extent of their riches; but Ali Baba, who was fearful of a discovery, determined to dig a hole in his garden, and bury the gold immediately: he therefore refused to wait till she had counted the money. Still his wife was anxious to form some idea of their wealth: at last, she resolved to borrow a measure, that, while her husband dug the hole, she might by that means ascertain how much was in the heap. Away ran the wife to the house of Cassim, and asked her sister-in-law to lend her a small measure. Cassim's wife immediately complied with her request; but, being well aware of Ali Baba's poverty, she was desirous of knowing what sort of corn his wife wanted to measure. To satisfy her curiosity in this particular, she privately rubbed a little suet on the bottom of the measure.

Ali Baba's wife returned home without suspecting the artful contrivance of her sister-in-law, and, setting the vessel on the heap of gold, proceeded to measure her money. By the time she had finished, her husband had prepared the hole; and, while he buried the treasure, she returned the measure to her sister-in-law. As soon as she was gone, Cassim's wife examined the measure, and, to her inexpressible surprise, found a small piece of gold adhering to the bottom. Her husband was absent from home; but, the moment he returned, she said to him, "Cassim, you have hitherto thought yourself much richer than your brother, Ali Baba, but you are mistaken; for he is so wealthy that he does not count his money, but measures it."

Cassim bade her explain her meaning, which she did, by relating her stratagem, and showing him the piece of gold. Instead of rejoicing at his brother's prosperity, envy seized the soul of Cassim: this uneasy passion made him so restless all night, that he could not close his eyes, but rose by dawn of day, and hastened to his brother's cottage. "Ali Baba," said he, "you pretend to be very poor, and yet you possess such a profusion of wealth that you measure gold." He then

showed him the little coin, and told him how his wife found it at the bottom of the measure.

By this discourse Ali Baba found that his brother and sister-in-law had discovered that he possessed a large sum of money. He was vexed at his wife's imprudence; but, as he was apprehensive lest his brother should think he gained the gold by dishonest means, he thought it best to reveal to him the whole adventure. He explained the manner in which he found the retreat of the robbers, and offered to give him a share of the gold he had brought from the cave, if he would keep the secret. But this did not content the avaricious mind of Cassim. He threatened his brother to inform the magistrates of his discovery, if he did not immediately tell him where the great mass of treasure lay, that he might approach it when he liked, and take away as much as he pleased.

Compelled by the menaces of this unnatural brother, Ali Baba gave him a full description of the cave, and told him the words by which he could obtain entrance.

Cassim rose early the next morning, and went to the forest, taking with him ten mules, loaded with large chests, which he intended to fill, and

then return for another cargo, hoping by this means to forestall his brother, and appropriate all the treasure to his own use.

He found the rock which Ali Baba had described, without much difficulty. Directly he pronounced the words, "Open, Sesame!" the door of the cave unclosed, and, when he entered it, shut after him.

After feasting his eyes, for some time, with the contemplation of the immense treasure before him, he conveyed a great many bags of gold to the door (ready to place on his mules); but, when he wished to open it, he found that the proper word had escaped his memory.

Cassim was aware that the word signified some sort of corn. He said, "Open, Barley!" but, to his great alarm, the door continued fast shut. He then named every kind of grain he could remember, but to no purpose; and, the more he strove to recollect the right word, the farther it fled from his memory. He then tried to force the door, but it resisted his most powerful efforts. When he found his escape hopeless, he walked frettingly about the cave, bewailing his unhappy destiny, regardless of the riches by which he was surrounded.

About midnight the thieves returned; but, before they approached the cave, they met Cassim's mules, wandering about the wood with empty chests on their backs. This causing some alarm to the robbers, they were anxious to find the owner of the mules. They immediately alighted; and, while some of the party searched the vicinity of the cave, others approached the door with their drawn sabres in their hands. The captain then pronounced the words, "Open, Sesame," and the door unclosed in an instant.

Cassim knew, by the trampling of horses' feet without the cave, that the robbers were returned. The moment he heard them pronounce the word he had forgotten, and saw the door open, he sprung out of the cave, and tried to rush past them, resolving to make a bold effort to save his life. In his sudden egress, he knocked down the captain, but could not escape the sabres of the other robbers.

After they had put him to death, they entered the cave, and soon perceived the bags of gold he had conveyed to the door. By this circumstance the thieves supposed they had luckily returned when the intruder was in the very act of carrying off their treasure; but they were perfectly at a

loss to know by what means he had obtained entrance. Their opinions were various on this head: some supposed that he had descended through the opening above; but others, who considered the height of the dome, and the steepness of the rock, concluded that he had by some unaccountable means learnt the secret words which opened the door. It was a matter of still greater importance for them to know whether this man had an accomplice; but, as he had no person with him to take care of his mules, they rather supposed he had not. However, to guard against the worst, and terrify any other person who might enter their retreat, they cut the body of Cassim into four quarters, and hung two on one side of the door, and two on the other, within the cave. After closing the door, they drove away Cassim's mules, and returned to their usual occupation of lurking on the roads to plunder travellers.

When Cassim's wife found that her husband did not come back at night, she became very uneasy, and in the morning went to Ali Baba in great distress, saying that his brother had not returned from the forest, and she feared that some harm had befallen him. Ali Baba, generously forgetting all Cassim's unkind treatment, told his sister-

in-law to moderate her grief, for he would go to the forest and see what had become of his brother.

He took his three asses, and went immediately to the cave. He was alarmed to see blood spilt at the entrance, which he thought foreboded something fatal, but he was much more startled when the door opened at his command, and he beheld the dismal spectacle of his brother's mangled body. He guessed that the robbers had murdered Cassim, and, being determined his remains should receive decent burial, he wrapped the body in a piece of brocade, and laid it on one of his asses. He then loaded the other two with bags of gold, and, covering all over with green boughs, he returned as soon as possible to the town. When he arrived at home, he left the asses which were laden with gold to the care of his wife, and led the other to the house of his sister-in-law.

The moment the wife of Cassim saw Ali Baba, she knew by his countenance that he was the bearer of ill tidings; and when he related her husband's death, and the state in which he had found his body, she began to make the most bitter lamentations. Ali Baba begged her to suppress her cries and sobs as much as possible, since it was requisite that the murder of Cassim should be

kept a profound secret, for, if all the circumstances of his death became public, the robbers would know he was the person whom they had killed in the cave, and, out of revenge, would murder the whole family. This argument had a great effect on the widow; she stifled her grief as well as she could, and Ali Baba resolved to make everything appear as if his brother had died a natural death.

There was a female slave in Cassim's family called Morgiana, whom Ali Baba knew to be very faithful, and of a disposition so shrewd and clever, that she could succeed in the most difficult undertakings: to her Ali Baba confided the peculiar circumstances of her master's death. Morgiana promised that she would observe the most inviolable secrecy, and use her utmost dexterity in managing the business.

That evening Morgiana went to the shop of a neighbouring apothecary, saying that her master was taken ill, and she wanted some lozenges which were sold as a remedy for dangerous complaints. In the morning she came again, with a very sorrowful countenance, to purchase an essence which was used to rub sick people when at the last extremity; but she said she feared it would be of as little use as the lozenges. By this

means Cassim was supposed to be at the point of death, and no one was surprised to hear in a little time the doleful cries and lamentations of the widow, who was now permitted to give vent to her grief.

Morgiana's next care was to contrive how the body should be properly arranged to receive burial. For this purpose, she went the next morning, very early, to a distant part of the town, where she remembered to have seen a certain old cobbler, called Mustapha, at work in his stall by peep of day. She gave this man a piece of gold, on condition that he would take his sewing apparatus, and accompany her, to do some work that required secrecy. Mustapha consented, and accompanied Morgiana; but, before they approached the street where she lived, Morgiana took the precaution of blindfolding the cobbler, lest he should remember the house, and prate of the matter.

She then brought him in to the room where the dismembered body lay, and told him to stitch the quarters together. After he had performed this task to her satisfaction, she gave him another piece of gold, and, again covering his eyes, led him back to his stall, and returned by such per-

plexed and circuitous ways, that it was impossible for Mustapha to watch her home.

When this was done, Morgiana assisted Ali Baba to lay the body in a coffin, and when the lid was nailed down, the neighbours of the deceased and the imans of the mosque* were summoned to assist at the funeral, and the burial rites were performed with all due solemnity.

As Cassim had left no children, his widow found living by herself so lonely, and was besides in such perpetual dread of the robbers, that she persuaded Ali Baba and his family to reside with her in Cassim's house. Ali Baba had now the satisfaction of enjoying his good fortune without exciting wonder at his sudden wealth, since it was generally supposed that his rich brother had left him part of his property.

In the meantime the thieves came to visit their retreat, and were greatly surprised to find Cassim's body gone, and some of their gold taken away. It was very apparent to them that the secret of opening the cave was known to some person connected with the murdered man; and they resolv-

* Imans of the mosque are priests of Mahometan places of worship.

ed to lay aside every other enterprise, till they had succeeded in discovering him.

The captain then proposed that one of the troop should go as a spy to the town, and learn whether there was a rumour afloat of any person having been lately murdered; and, if he could gain any such intelligence, to find out the house where his family lived, and all particulars relating to him. The theives unanimously agreed to this plan, as the best means of enabling them to guess the unknown person who was in possession of their secret. They then made a law, that whosoever should undertake this office, and prove unsuccessful in the attempt, should instantly suffer death.

One of the bravest young men of the troop immediately offered his services in this dangerous employment, and agreed to forfeit his life if he should fail in the enterprise.

The next morning the robber completely disguised himself, and entered the town by break of day: at that early hour all shops were shut up, and he found no one stirring excepting the cobbler Mustapha, who had already opened his stall, and begun to work. The thief thought that he was a likely person to know all the news of the town,

and therefore entered into discourse with him. Mustapha told him a great variety of gossiping stories; but, notwithstanding all his artful inquiries, he could hear no report of any person having been lately murdered. At last he happened to say, in course of conversation, that he wondered such an old man could see to stitch before it was well daylight.

"Ah! ah!" said the old man, "you must own that I have remarkably good eyes; but, perhaps, you will scarcely believe me, when I tell you that I stitched together a dead body in a place where there was much less light than I have at present."

The spy comprehended in a moment that this must be the body of the man they had killed, and was overjoyed to find that he had met, by accident, the only person capable of giving him the intelligence he wanted. "How!" said he, pretending great amazement, "do you say that you stitched up a dead body? You mean that you sewed up its winding-sheet?"

"No, no;" replied Mustapha, "I mean what I say; I see you want to learn all I know: but you will hear no more from me."

The robber then put a piece of gold in the

cobbler's hand, and said to him,—"I don't wish you to tell me your secret, though, if you did, I would not divulge it. I only ask you to show me the house where you stitched together the dead body."

"That is out of my power," replied the cobbler, "for I was employed by a person totally unknown to me, and blindfolded when I came to a certain part of the town, then conducted to a house at some distance, and, when I had finished my singular task, I was led back in the same manner as I came."

"Well," returned the thief, "but perhaps you may guess the number of steps you took, and remember the turnings of the streets through which you were led blindfold. Here is another piece of gold, if you will show me the way, to the best of your ability."

This was a temptation too great for Mustapha to resist, and he immediately conducted the thief to the place where Morgiana had blindfolded him. "Here," said the cobbler, "my eyes were covered, and I turned to the right hand." The robber then tied a handkerchief over Mustapha's eyes, and the old man guessed the way so well, that he took every turning the same as when he was guided by

Morgiana, and stopped directly opposite to Cassim's house, which was now occupied by Ali Baba. "I think," said Mustapha, "I went no farther than this spot."

The robber then marked the door with a piece of chalk, that he might know it again, and, taking the bandage from Mustapha's eyes, asked him whether ke knew who lived in that house. To which he replied that, as he did not reside in the neighbourhood, he could not tell him. The thief, finding he could learn nothing more of Mustapha, left him, and returned to the forest.

A little while after this, Morgiana happened to go out of the house: in a moment she espied the white mark on the door, and did not like its appearance. "It may be only the trick of some idle boy," said she to herself; "but, nevertheless, it is as well to guard against the worst." Accordingly, she fetched a piece of chalk, and marked in a similar manner the doors of several dwellings on each side of her master's house.

Meantime the spy rejoined his companions in the forest, and gave them an account of his proceedings. They listened to him with great satisfaction, and resolved that some of their party should enter the town in the evening, and, having

ascertained the house, beset it after dark, and put all the inhabitants to death.

When night came, the spy led the captain and several of the troop to the street where Ali Baba lived; but, when he endeavoured to find the house, he was so perplexed by the multiplicity of marks, that he found it impossible to point out the right door. He was obliged to explain this circumstance to the captain, and owned that he had failed in his undertaking. The captain, who dared not make an attack at an uncertainty, was forced to lead back his men to the forest. On their return, the spy was considered worthy of death, and he submitted without repining to the fatal stroke.

Another of the troop, who thought that he should succeed better, immediately offered himself to supply the place of his deceased companion. He went to the town, and bribed Mustapha to show him the house, which he marked in a place more remote from sight with a bit of red chalk.

But nothing could escape the piercing eyes of Morgiana; she discovered the new mark the moment she went out, and chalked all the neighbouring houses in the same manner.

By this precaution, the captain and his party were again baffled, and, according to the law they had agreed on, the second robber suffered death.

The captain so much regretted the loss of these two men, who were the bravest in his troop, that he declared he would no longer trust this important affair to any other person, but take it solely on himself.

He went immediately to the town and applied to Mustapha, who conducted him to Ali Baba's dwelling. The captain did not amuse himself by setting any mark on the house, but examined it so long and attentively that he was sure he could not mistaken: he then went to a shop in the neighbourhood, and, made every inquiry possible, respecting the master of the house, and having heard that he gained his living before his brother's death by cutting wood in the neighbouring forest, he concluded, to a certainty that he was the man who had discovered their retreat.

When he returned to the cave, where his men waited for him, he said to them, "I have now discovered the person who has invaded our treasure, and nothing can prevent our revenge, for, in my way home, I have thought of a project which I am certain will be successful."

He then ordered his men to go to a distant town, and buy nineteen mules and thirty-eight jars (each large enough to contain a man), and to fill one of them with oil.

When these were procured, the captain caused an armed robber to get into each jar, and then loaded the nineteen mules with thirty-seven men and one jar of oil.

The captain, attired like an oil-merchant, drove the mules to the town, and in this disguise they entered the street where Ali Baba lived, about nightfall.

Ali Baba was sitting at the door, enjoying the the cool of the evening, when the disguised captain of robbers accosted him, saying that he was a merchant who had brought some oil to the town, to offer in the market next day, and, as he was a stranger, he did not know, at that late hour, where to lodge or place his property in safety; he therefore requested Ali Baba to let him put his mules and jars in his court-yard, and permit him to pass the night by them.

Ali Baba very hospitably granted his request; for, though he had seen the captain of banditti, and even heard him speak in the forest, yet he

was far from recognising him in the disguise of an oil-merchant.

When the captain had unloaded his mules and led them to the stable, Ali Baba went to him, and very kindly invited him to take a bed and supper in the house, and, while Morgiana was preparing them, he diverted his guest by agreeable conversation.

Before the captain went to bed, he made a pretence of going into the stable to look after his mules, instead of which he opened each jar, and told the robber within the signal he meant to use when it was time to break into the house.

While he was gone, Ali Baba told Morgiana that, as he intended to bathe next morning, she must make some broth that night, ready for him to take after he came out of the bath. He then bade her pay every attention to his guest, and retired for the night. When the pretended oil-merchant returned to the house, Morgiana gave him a light, and conducted him to his chamber. He very soon put out his light, but only laid down in his clothes, intending to rise as soon as the family were asleep, and let his men into the house.

Before Morgiana went to bed, she knew it was

necessary to prepare her master's broth for the morning; but, as she was in the midst of making it, her lamp went out; this circumstance greatly perplexed her, as she knew there was no more oil in the house. While she was fretting at the inconvenience, she suddenly recollected the great jars of oil that stood in the yard, and determined to supply her lamp from one of them: so, taking her oil-pot, she went out, and, opening the jar that stood first, she heard a voice from within say, in a deep hollow tone—"Is it time?"

Any woman but Morgiana would have made a terrible outcry, and roused the rest of the troop by her shrieks, but she instantly guessed the danger of making an alarm, and replied, with admirable presence of mind, in a whisper,—"Not yet, but presently."

Morgiana ascertained, by opening seven-and-thirty jars, and answering the same question, that Ali Baba had admitted the same gang of thieves that had murdered her master, Cassim.

When she came to the last jar, and found it full of oil, she supplied her lamp, and returned to the house.

In this dilemma she paused for a few moments, to consider what was best to be done; but, as she

possessed uncommon energy of mind, she soon formed a resolution, and put it in execution.

She had been brought up, when a child, in the house of a Jewish physician, and had learned from him many valuable secrets. Among others, she knew a drug which was of so stupifying and deleterious a nature, that, if it was shut up with any living creature in a close place, it would cause instant death. Morgiana softly quitted the house, and, going to the apothecary that lived close by (who was still up), she purchased a sufficient quantity of this drug, then returned to the court-yard, and, speaking a few words, in the captain's voice, to each robber, she at the same time artfully introduced a portion of this drug into every jar, and replaced the cover.

She then went back to the house and sat down in an obscure place, to watch the proceedings of the pretended oil-merchant, whom she rightly supposed to be captain of the gang.

She had not waited more than half an hour before the captain of the thieves gave the signal to his men, by throwing stones against the jars, but he was astonished to find that they did not stir. He threw a second and a third time, but with no better success; he could not comprehend the reason

that not one of his troop chose to answer the signal upon which they had agreed.

He stole softly into the yard, and going to the first jar, he opened it, and asked the dead thief within, if he was asleep. Dreadfully alarmed at receiving no answer, he spoke again, and then discovered that the man was dead. In this manner he examined every jar, and found that all his troop were lifeless. He supposed that his plot was known to Ali Baba, who had, by some mysterious means, put all his gang to death. The captain was in despair at the loss of so many faithful followers, and, though he longed to revenge them, he considered that he must wait a fitter opportunity: so, climbing over the garden wall, he escaped into the fields, and from thence to the forest.

When Morgiana found that the treacherous merchant was entirely gone, she called her master; when he got up, she led him to one of the jars, and asked him to look within. By the light of the moon, which was just rising, Ali Baba beheld a man in the jar. He started back with an exclamation of horror: "Do not be alarmed," said Morgiana, "the man you see there can neither hurt you nor any one else,—he is dead."

Ali Baba begged her to explain herself, which

she did, by relating every thing that had happened.

Ali Baba then found, to his infinite astonishment, that the courage of his female slave had preserved him, his wife, and family, from destruction. He expressed the warmest gratitude to Morgiana, made her free from that moment, and promised to consider her, for the future, as a daughter.

After his first surprise was over, Ali Baba began to consider what he should do with the dead bodies of the thieves. He had a large garden, thickly covered with trees: at the lower end, with the assistance of his son, Ali Baba dug a deep trench, in which he interred the robbers; after this, he hid the jars, and sent his son to a distant village to sell the mules. By these precautions he effectually concealed from the world his adventure in the cave.

In the meantime, the captain of the robbers returned to his retreat in the forest. The loneliness of the place seemed frightful to him. "Where are you, my brave lads,—my old companions?" he exclaimed. "Alas! you have perished in a manner unworthy your courage. Had you died like brave men, with your sabres in your hands, I

should not have regretted your fate. I will first revenge you on your destroyer, and then provide new masters for the treasure contained in this cave."

His first care was to disguise himself in so artful a manner that it was impossible for any one to recognise his person; after this he returned to the town, hired a shop, and furnished it from some of the stores in the cave; he then took the name of Cogia Housain, pretending to be a merchant from Ispahan.

Ali Baba had given his son the shop of his late uncle Cassim, and this being next door to the shop hired by the disguised captain of banditti, an acquaintance was soon formed between him and the son of Ali Baba. As it was the object of the pretended Cogia Housain to gain an introduction to the family of Ali Baba, that he might with greater facility execute his intended vengeance, he paid much attention to the young man, frequently made him presents, and invited him to his house.

The son of Ali Baba of course wished to make some return for these civilities, and, after mentioning the matter to his father, Ali Baba gave him leave to invite his friend to an entertainment at his house.

Cogia Housain pretended to decline this invitation, and, when his young friend demanded the reason, he replied, "that he had a great objection to supping from home, since his taste was so singular, that he could partake of no provisions that were seasoned with salt." The young man assured him that the viands should be prepared according to his peculiar taste, and, at last, Cogia Housain consented to accompany the son of Ali Baba to his father's house that evening.

Morgiana was entrusted with the preparation of this banquet, but was greatly perplexed when her master told her that she was to put no salt in the ragouts. She meditated a long time on this circumstance, but took care to obey her master's orders.

When supper was served up, Morgiana took the opportunity of looking attentively at the guest, and immediately knew him to be the pretended oil-merchant. "Ah!" said she, "no wonder this vile wretch refuses to eat salt with my master,* since he has entered his house with the intention of assassinating him."

* This passage alludes to a peculiar custom of the east. Salt is considered as a sacred pledge of hospitality both by the

This was certainly a fact, for Cogia Housain meant to persuade both father and son to drink too much wine, and, when they were so much intoxicated that they could not defend themselves, he intended to spare the son but stab the father to the heart, and then make his escape, as before, over the garden wall.

When the supper was removed, Ali Baba requested Morgiana to dance for the amusement of his guest: in obedience to her master, Morgiana presently made her appearance, dressed as a dancer; her waist was girded with a silver belt, to which hung a poniard with a sheath of the same metal; she had a mask on her face, and carried a tambarine in her hand.

After she had danced to the sound of the tambarine some time, she drew her poniard and performed a dance remarkable for the variety of fine movements it required. In the course of the figure she sometimes pointed her poniard to the breast of one, and sometimes to another, and oftentimes seemed to strike her own. After she had made

guest and host: no Arab who has once shared bread and salt with another person will attempt to injure him; should any Arabian be found base enough to violate this law, he would be considered as infamous by his whole tribe.

these feigned attacks several times, she watched her opportunity, and suddenly plunged her dagger to the hilt in the bosom of the captain of banditti, who expired in a moment.

"What madness has seized you, unhappy Morgiana?" exclaimed Ali Baba. "Wherefore have you murdered my guest?"

"Look well at him," said Morgiana, "and you will see who it is you have so hospitably entertained. He is the same person as the captain of the banditti, and the pretented oil-merchant; it is true he had disguised himself so artfully that I should not have known him, if my suspicions had not been roused by his refusal to eat salt with you: I then remembered that I had observed the false oil-merchant abstained from eating salt at table. These circumstances drew my attention to him; I immediately recognised your deadly enemy, and determined to save you from his malice."

Ali Baba and his son were now convinced that they owed their lives a second time to the courage and fidelity of Morgiana. Ali Baba, penetrated by gratitude, offered Morgiana in marriage to his son, who was so much charmed with her virtue and good qualities, that he cheerfully received her as his wife.

For many years Ali Baba lived in great happiness and wealth: he had undisturbed possession of the cave, and used the treasure with moderation, applying a great part in liberal alms to the poor. He discovered the secret to his son, who transmitted it to his posterity, and Ali Baba's descendants became, in time, the first people in the country.

THE ENVIOUS MAN;

OR,

ZADOC AND ARIMANES.

Two persons, of very different characters, were near neighbours, in a populous town; one was called Arimanes, and the other Zadoc. Arimanes was of a disposition so envious, that he conceived the most deadly hatred to his neighbour, because Zadoc was of a sweet and amiable temper, and was beloved by all men.

Zadoc did every thing in his power to make peace with his neighbour, and omitted no act of friendly service that he was able to perform for his benefit; but all was of no avail: the better he behaved the more rancorous Arimanes became. In hopes of easing his neighbour's mind by his absence, the good Zadoc sold his house and property, and removed his residence to the capital city of that country, which was not far distant. Here he bought a pleasant house (about half a mile from the city), that had a fine garden and a spacious court, within which was an old well that

was never used. Zadoc, having a wish to lead a retired life, and to devote himself entirely to good works, put on a dervise's or monk's habit, and caused several cells to be made in his house, where he soon established a numerous society of dervises, of which (though he was a very young man) he became the head.

He was soon publicly known by his virtues, and people came from afar to recommend themselves to his prayers; and all the city published the great good he did, and the blessings they received through his means.

The great reputation of Zadoc having reached the town from whence he came, it touched his envious neighbour to the quick, and occasioned him such uneasiness, that he left his house and affairs, and travelled to the city, with the intention of murdering Zadoc.

With this vile intent he went to the new convent of dervises, and desired to speak to Zadoc, who received him with the greatest courtesy. The envious man told him that he was come to consult him on a matter of great importance, which required to be heard in private. "Let us," said he, "take a walk in your court, where I will communicate my business to you; and, as night

draws on, you can command your dervises to retire to their cells, lest they should overhear our discourse."

When Arimanes found himself alone with Zadoc, he began to tell a long fabricated story, walking by his side till they approached the well, when the envious man, watching his opportunity, gave Zadoc a thrust, which plunged him into the well, without any person being witness to his treacherous action.

After committing this crime, he departed immediately, and got, unseen, out of the convent gates, and returned to his home, well satisfied with the thought that he had destroyed the object of his hatred; but he was very much mistaken.

This old well, fortunately for Zadoc, was inhabited by fairies and genii, who received him in their arms, and conveyed him safely to the bottom. He perceived there was something very extraordinary in his fall, which, without supernatural means, he was certain must have cost him his life; yet he neither saw nor felt any thing: but he soon heard a voice, which said, "Do you know who this excellent man is for whom we have performed this piece of service?" Another voice

answered, "No." To which the first replied, "Then I will tell you: this man, out of charity, the greatest that ever was known, left the town in which he lived, and established himself in this place, to cure one of his neighbours of an envious hatred which he had conceived against him. He has acquired such a general esteem in this city, that his envious neighbour, not being able to endure his fame, came hither on purpose to murder him, and had certainly effected his vile intention but for our timely assistance. It gives me pleasure to think we have preserved so good a man, whose reputation is so great, that the sultan means to come to his convent to-morrow, to recommend the princess, his only daughter, to his prayers."

Another voice asked,—"What occasion has the princess for his prayers?"

To which the first answered,—"You do not know, it seems, that she is possessed by the Genie Maimour, the son of Dimdim. But I know well how this good chief of the dervises may cure her; the remedy is very easy, and I will tell you what it is: Zadoc has a black cat in his convent, with a white spot at the end of her tail, about the bigness of a small Arabian piece of money. Let him

only pull seven hairs out of this white spot, burn them, and smoke the princess's head with the fume, and she will not only be presently cured, but be so entirely delivered from Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, that he will never dare to come near her a second time."

Zadoc remembered every word that passed between the fairies and the genies, who were very silent during the remainder of the night. When the sun rose and shed a little light into the well, Zadoc perceived a hole, which went sloping upwards to the surface of the ground, through which he crept out of the well with ease.

His dervises, who were seeking him in great alarm, were rejoiced at his safe return. He gave them a brief account of the wickedness of the man whom they had seen him welcome with so much kindness the day before, and then returned to his cell. It was not long before the black cat, mentioned by the fairies, came to fawn upon her master; he took her up and pulled seven hairs out of the white spot in her tail, and laid them by for use.

Before noon the sultan arrived at the gate of the convent. He commanded his guards to halt, and entered, attended by his principal officers.

The sultan called the chief of the dervises aside, and said to him,—"Good Sheich*, perhaps you already know the cause of my coming."

"I suppose, sire," replied Zadoc, "it is the illness of the princess which procures me that honour."

"You are right," said the sultan; "I come to recommend her to your prayers, and I hope they will be the means of restoring her to health."

"If your majesty will permit the princess to come hither," replied the dervise, "I trust, through the favour and assistance of Alla, that she will return in perfect health."

The sultan, transported with joy, sent immediately for the princess, who soon arrived, attended by a numerous retinue of ladies. She was magnificently dressed, but so closely veiled, that her face could not be seen. The chief of the dervises caused a pall to be held over her head, and then threw the tuft of hair on a censer of burning coals. At that moment the Genie Maimoun, the son of Dimdim, gave a great cry and left the princess at liberty, who, being restored to her senses,

* The title of the priest who is the head of a Mahomedan mosque or convent.

immediately rose up and took off her veil, saying, "Where am I? Who brought me here?" The sultan was overcome with joy to see his daughter's recovery, and, in a transport of gratitude, said to his nobles, who surrounded him,—"Tell me what reward does he deserve, who has thus cured the princess, my daughter."

They all exclaimed, with one consent,—"He deserves her in marriage!"

"I agree with you," said the sultan, "and from this moment I declare him to be my son-in-law."

Some time after this marriage, the prime vizier died, and the sultan conferred this post on Zadoc. The sultan himself died, in a little time, without heirs male, upon which the religious and military chiefs gathered together, and proclaimed Zadoc sultan, with universal consent.

In was now in his power to have punished the envious man for all his crimes, instead of which he sent for him, and told him that he freely forgave him for his attempt on his life, which, he assured him, had been the means of his advancement, and, to show him that he bore no enmity for the past, he presented him with a thousand pieces of gold, and bade him depart in peace.

If the happiness of Zadoc, when he was in the same rank of life with himself, occasioned such misery to the envious man, we may suppose how much he was tortured when he found that the man he envied had been advanced to regal dignity through his own misdirected hatred. Neither the clemency nor munificence of Zadoc had the least effect in changing the evil disposition of Arimanes; he sickened with spite, and died of mere chagrin, before Zadoc had reigned one year.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE CASKET.

THERE was once a fisherman who was so very unsuccessful, that he could scarcely find bread for himself and his family by his daily labour.

He rose early one morning, and, coming to the sea-shore by moonlight, he cast his nets into the water. When he drew them to land, he felt they were very heavy, and expected, of course, that they were full of fish ; but his hopes were greatly disappointed when he found nothing in them but the carcass of an ass. He threw his nets a second time, but brought up nothing but stones and slime, at which his vexation was extreme. Day, however, began to appear, and, like a good mussulman, he left his labour, and performed his ablutions and said his prayers, adding to them a petition, in which he implored Heaven to grant him better success. He then washed his nets from the slime and mud, and cast them into the sea a third time ; he drew them to the shore, as usual, with great difficulty; but, instead of fish, he, found in them a vessel of yellow copper, which was closely shut with

a leaden cover, that bore the impression of a large seal. He examined this casket on all sides, and its great weight, and the care with which it was sealed, made him suppose that there was something very precious enclosed within. He became very desirous of opening his prize, and, taking his knife, he raised the seal with very little trouble. He then turned the mouth downwards, but, to his great surprise, nothing came out. He set the casket on the ground before him, and, as he was looking at it very attentively, there issued from it a thick black smoke, which made him retire to some little distance.

This smoke mounted as high as the clouds, and, extending itself along the sea and upon the shore, formed a dense mist, which greatly amazed the fisherman. The smoke presently united into a solid body, which became a genie, twice as high as one of the largest giants. The fisherman was so much terrified at the sight of so enormous a monster that he would have fled, but was unable to move from the spot.

"Soloman," cried the genie immediately, "Soloman, thou great prophet, pardon, pardon, and I never more will disobey thy commands."

The fisherman presently recovered his courage,

and said to the genie, "Thou proud spirit, what is it that thou sayest? It is above eighteen hundred years since the prophet Soloman died, and we are now at the end of time."

"You are very bold to call me a proud spirit," replied the genie fiercely; "I would advise you to speak to me with more respect, since I am about to kill you."

"Ah!" said the fisherman, "wherefore should you kill me? Did I not just now set you at liberty, and have you already forgotten that good service?"

"I cannot treat you otherwise," replied the genie, "and, that you may be convinced that I am obliged to put you to death, listen to my story."

"I am one of those unconquered spirits that opposed themselves to the will of Heaven when all the other genies submitted to Soloman, the great prophet. Sacar and I were the only spirits that would not be guilty of such meanness, and, to avenge himself, that great monarch sent Asaph, his chief minister, to apprehend me: compelled by a superior power, which I could not resist, I was forced to appear before the throne of the son of David.

"The mighty Soloman commanded me to ac-

knowledge his power, and submit to his authority. I bravely refused to obey him, and declared that I would rather endure his vengeance, than own myself his vassal. To punish me, he enclosed me in this copper vessel, and, to make sure that I should not break prison, he stamped upon the leaden cover of the casket his own seal, on which was engraved the great name of God. He then gave the vessel to one of the genies who had submitted to him, with orders to throw me into the sea, which was executed, to my great sorrow.

"During the first hundred years of my imprisonment, I swore, that if any one would deliver me before the century expired, I would enrich him, and all his posterity; but nobody came to relieve me. During the second age, I made an oath, that I would discover all the treasures of the earth to any one who would set me at liberty; but with no better success. In the third, I promised to make my deliverer a powerful monarch, that I would be always near him invisibly, and that I would grant him, every day, three requests, of whatever nature they might be. But this century ran out like the two former, and I continued still in prison. At last, being enraged at finding myself so many ages in confinement, I swore, that if

any one should afterwards set me at liberty, I would kill him without pity; and grant him no other favour but that of choosing what kind of death he would die. Therefore, since you have delivered me, I now offer you that choice."

The poor fisherman was in despair when he heard the cruel intentions of this evil genie: it was in vain that he urged every possible argument to induce him to break his unreasonable oath,—all he could say was of no avail; for the genie told him, that if he did not speedily make up his mind and declare the sort of death he chose to die, he should choose for him, and kill him without waiting his determination.

"Since I must die," said the fisherman, "it is useless to fatigue myself with any more remonstrances. But, before I choose the manner of my death, I conjure you, by the great name engraved on the seal of Soloman, to answer me truly one question."

The genie trembled with awe, at the solemnity of this adjuration, and replied,—"Ask what thou wilt, but do it quickly."

"I would know for a certainty, if you were actually enclosed in that casket. Dare you swear that you were, by the great name of Allah."

"Yes," replied the genie, "I swear by that awful name, that I was confined in the narrow bounds of the vessel before you, for more than eighteen centuries."

"In good faith," said the fisherman, "I cannot believe you. How is it possible, that a vessel not large enough for one of your feet should be capable of containing your whole body?"

"I swear to thee, notwithstanding," answered the genie, "that it is a fact. Wilt thou not believe me after the great oath I have taken."

"Not I indeed!" said the fisherman. "Who do you think could believe a thing so improbable, unless they beheld it with their own eyes."

Upon which the body of the genie dissolved into smoke, extending itself as formerly, over the sea and shore; then, being gathered together, the smoke began to re-enter the vessel, with a slow and equal motion, till no part was left out; and immediately a voice issued from the casket, saying,—

"Well, incredulous fellow, dost thou believe me now?"

The fisherman, instead of answering the genie, seized the cover of lead, and instantly shut up the casket.

"Genie," cried he, "it is now your turn to implore my mercy, and to choose which way you shall die. But I shall give you no choice in the matter; I shall throw you into the sea from whence I took you. I will then build a house on the shore, where I will dwell, to give notice to all fishermen who may come to cast their nets, not to liberate a wicked and ungrateful genie, who has sworn to kill his deliverer."

The genie, enraged at finding himself again in confinement, made vehement efforts to burst his prison, and shook the casket so furiously, that the fisherman trembled, lest he should escape; but the seal of Soloman was too mighty for his strength. When he found that all his violence was of no avail, he thought proper to dissemble his anger, and said to the fisherman, in a pleasant tone,—"I hope, my good friend, you don't mean to resent what I said just now: I assure you I was only in jest."

"Think not," said the fisherman, "that I am to be deceived by your guileful words. To the sea you shall return, and, if you have already staid there for eighteen hundred years, you may very well remain in its depth, till the day of judgment."

"Hear me but one word more," said the genie: "if you will liberate me again, I solemly promise, that I will do you no harm; but, on the contrary, I will show you how you may become exceedingly rich."

The hope of delivering himself from the poverty under which he had languished so long prevailed with the fisherman. "Swear to me," he said, "by the great name of Allah, that you will faithfully perform your promise, and I will open the casket."

The genie took the oath required, and the fisherman immediately removed the lid of the vessel, and the smoke instantly came out.

The genie having resumed his form, the first thing he did was to kick the casket into the sea.

The fisherman was not a little alarmed at this action, but the genie laughed at his fear, and told him to take courage, and gather up his nets and follow him. He then led the way to a large plain, at the extremity of which was a large pond surrounded by four hills.

When they came to the side of the pond, the genie told the fisherman to cast in his nets. He did so, and drew out four fish, of a most extra-

ordinary appearance. They were each of four different colours, red, blue, white, and yellow, and were so singularly beautiful that the fisherman could not help admiring them.

"Carry those fish to your sultan," said the genie, "he will give you more money for them than you ever possessed in your life. You may take four fish daily out of this pond, but I charge you not to cast your nets more than once every day."

Having said these words, the genie struck the earth with his foot, which opened at his command, and closed again after it had received him.

The fisherman returned to the city, and immediately went to the palace, and presented the four fish to his sultan. The monarch was struck with admiration at the sight of them, and said to his vizier,—"These fish are surely as delicious to the taste as they are beautiful to the eye: give this good man five hundred pieces of gold, as a reward for bringing me such rarities; and carry them with your own hands to the excellent cook who was sent me by the emperor of the Greeks, and tell her to dress them for my dinner."

The fisherman was transported with joy, when he saw the munificent remuneration that the sul-

tan bestowed on him: he went away rejoicing, and purchased necessaries for his destitute family with the money.

In the meantime, the vizier carried the fish to the cook-maid, and charged her to use her utmost skill in dressing them. She cleaned the fish, and put them on the fire, in a frying-pan, with a proper quantity of oil, and, when she thought they were sufficiently cooked on one side, she turned them on the other. She had scarcely done so, when, to her infinite astonishment and alarm, the wall of the room opened, and a young lady of wonderful beauty entered through the chasm. Her robe was of flowered satin, after the Egyptian fashion; she wore long pendants in her ears, and a necklace of large pearls on her bosom; she had bracelets of gold set with rubies on her wrists, and she held a rod of myrtle in her hand. She approached the frying-pan, to the great terror of the cook, who stood immoveable at the sight; and, shaking one of the fish with her myrtle rod, she said,—"Fish, fish, art thou in thy duty." Then the fish lifted up their heads, and answered altogether,—"Yes, yes: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay our's; if you fly, we overcome and are content."

When they had finished speaking, the lady overturned the frying-pan, and retired through the rent in the wall, which closed after her, and appeared as before.

The cook-maid was terribly frightened at this scene. Presently she came a little to herself, and went to take up the fish from the hearth, but found them as black as coal, and quite unfit to send to the sultan's table.

She began to weep most bitterly. "Alas!" said she," what will become of me? If I tell the sultan what I have seen, he will never believe any thing so extraordinary, but will consider that I have invented a fine tale, to excuse my own carelessness."

While she was thus lamenting, the vizier came to know if the fish was ready. The cook told the vizier the singular circumstance that had happened, with so much earnestness, that he could not help believing her. The vizier made an excuse to the sultan that satisfied him, and then sent privately for the fisherman, and bade him procure four more fish directly. The fisherman, remembering the caution the genie had given him, resolved not to cast his nets into the pond a second time that day, but promised the visier that he should have them early the next morning.

The following day he went betimes to the pond, and caught four fish of the same colours as the former, and brought them to the vizier, who paid him four hundred pieces of gold, and gave the fish to the cook, with orders to fry them in his presence. Every thing went on well till the cook turned the fish in the frying-pan; then the wall opened, the beautiful lady appeared, and spoke to the fish, after shaking them with her rod of myrtle. When they answered, she overturned the pan, and retired through the wall, leaving the fish blacker than coal. The visier stood for some time lost in astonishment, at beholding such a prodigy; and then hastened to his royal master, to tell him all he had seen.

The sultan was greatly surprised at the vizier's relation, and was determined to see if these extraordinary circumstances would happen in his presence. He ordered the fisherman to procure for him four more fish, which he brought the next day, and received, a third time, four hundred pieces of gold in payment.

The sultan determined that these fish should be fried in his own closet, and gave orders to his vizier to prepare them for cooking with his own hands. When they were fried on one side, the

vizier turned them on the other: at that moment the wall of the royal closet parted in two, but, instead of the fair lady they expected to see, there entered a gigantic black, habited as a slave; this black held in his hand a large green batton, with which he struck the fish, and cried, in a voice of thunder,—"Fish, fish, are you in your duty?" Upon which they all lifted up their heads, and answered at once,—"Yes, yes, we are: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay our's; if you fly, we overcome and are content."

They had no sooner uttered these words, than the black threw the frying-pan into the middle of the closet, and reduced the fish to cinders, and then retired through the open wall, which immediately closed after him.

The sultan remained very uneasy in his mind after this strange event. He sent for the fisherman, to question him concerning the place where he caught these remarkable fish. The man described the extensive plain to which the genie had conducted him, and said, that he caught the fish in a large pond between four little hills.

"It is very extraordinary," said the king, "that, some years ago, I used frequently to hunt in that

very plain, and yet I cannot remember the pool of water, or the four little hills you mentioned."

On inquiry, he found that this spot was equally unknown to his vizier and nobles, which was the more remarkable, as the plain was only three hours' journey from the capital. Being determined to see this place himself, he mounted his horse, and with his whole court proceeded to the plain, attended by the fisherman, who served them for a guide. After travelling for three hours they came to the pond, which they found situated exactly as the fisherman had described.

As the waters of the pond were very transparent, the fish could be plainly seen, and their beautiful colours filled the whole court with admiration; but not one had ever seen the pond before. The sultan was so perplexed at this, and all the other singular events connected with the fish, that he ordered his court to encamp on the banks of this pool, and determined that he would not return to his palace, till he had gained some explanation of these mysterious circumstances.

When night came, the sultan armed himself with his cimiter and left his tent, after giving orders to his vizier to tell his court (if he did not

speedily return), that he was ill, and chose to remain in his pavilion.

After descending one of the hills, the sultan walked onwards till the sun rose, when he beheld, at a little distance, a magnificent castle, that he had never seen before. It was a noble building, entirely covered with plates of fine steel, as bright and as smooth as a mirror. He approached a gate which was open, and, though he might have entered uninterrupted, he thought it would be better manners to knock.

At first he knocked very softly, and then louder and louder, but still no one came; and, his patience being then exhausted, he resolved to enter without further ceremony.

All was silent in the building. He called aloud, but received no answer, save the echo of his own voice. He walked from room to room, and, though he was surrounded by the utmost magnificence, he met no living thing. At last, he came to a room that excelled all the others in splendour, in the midst of which was a fountain with a lion of gold at each corner. Water issued from the mouths of the four lions, which formed diamonds and pearls as it fell. The sultan stood for some minutes silent, lost in admiration; when, all of a sudden,

he thought he heard a sigh just by him. He started, and listened intently, and presently heard these words; proceed from a curtained recess close by: "Oh! death, when wilt thou put an end to my sorrows? Alas! wherefore do I live, after the torments I have suffered." Astonished by these words, the sultan drew the curtain that concealed the speaker, and found himself in a saloon, at the upper end of which was a young man, seated on a gorgeous throne, that was raised some steps above the level of the room. He was habited in regal splendour, but melancholy sat uponhis countenance.

The sultan drew near to him, and saluted him, and then asked him the reason of his lamentation, and whether he could be of any service to him. "Alas! kind stranger," said the young man, "my calamities are beyond your power to remedy: see," continued he, "whether or no I have cause for complaint." At these words, he removed his robe, and the sultan saw that his body, from the waist downwards, had been changed into black marble. The sultan stood aghast at this horrid spectacle; but, presently recovering himself, he earnestly entreated the young man to tell him the reason of this strange transformation. He readily

complied with this request, and began to relate the history of his misfortunes.

"I am," said he, "a king, and once ruled over four islands, which were called the Black Isles; but my kingdom is destroyed, and myself reduced to this deplorable state, by the revengeful malice of my wife, who is a powerful magician. This wicked woman was attached to a vile black, whom she had the baseness to prefer to me, her king and husband. I discovered her ill conduct, and, meeting her one day with the black, I drew my cimiter, and mortally wounded him, but spared my wife, in hopes that she would repent of her wickedness. Out of revenge, the queen had recourse to her incantations; and I became, you see, a living man half dead. After this cruel sorceress, unworthy the name of a queen, had metamorphosed me thus, she conveyed me to this hall. By another enchantment, she changed the four islands that composed my dominions into four little hills; and my capital city, which was very populous and flourishing, into a pool of water, which perhaps you may have seen."

"I have," replied the sultan, "and the fish that were taken out of the pond have occasioned

great perplexity." He then told the king of the Black Isles who he was, and all the adventures that had happened concerning these fish of divers colours.

"These fish," continued the king of the Black Isles, "were my subjects, and those you see of four colours are the people of the four different religions that inhabited the city. The white are the Mussulmen; the red, the Persians, who worship fire; the blue, the Christians; and the yellow, the Jews. I learnt all this from the magician, who, to add to my affliction, took pleasure in telling me the effects of her rage. But this is not all: she was not satisfied with the destruction of my kingdom, and the metamorphosis of my person—she comes every day, and gives me, on my naked shoulders, a hundred blows with a scourge of leather, which covers me with blood; she then throws on me a coarse stuff of goat's hair, and puts over it this robe of brocade that you see, not to do me honour, but to mock me."

The sultan was so much moved by the distressing recital, that he said; "Tell me where this inhuman magician retires, that I may pursue her, and revenge your many wrongs, by putting her to death."

"I cannot tell you her place of abode," replied the young king: "all I know is, that she has raised a marble dome, adjoining to this castle, which she calls the Palace of Tears. In this place she has deposited the body of her favourite black, whom she still keeps alive by her enchantments, though he can neither speak nor move. She visits this wretch and bewails his inanimate state every morning, after she has inflicted her barbarous vengeance on me."

While the sultan listened to this account, he formed a plan in his own mind, by which he thought he could deliver the unfortunate young king. He was resolved to put it in execution directly, and therefore bade adieu to the king of the Black Isles, and proceeded to the Palace of Tears. He found it lighted by an infinite number of wax tapers, and a delicious perfume issued from many urns of fine gold of exquisite workmanship, which stood ranged round a raised couch, in admirable order. The sultan approached this couch, where the breathing body of the black lay under coverlets of the most beautiful embroidery.

The sultan immediately drew his cimiter and deprived the black of the little life he had remaining, then dragged the body into the court of

the castle, and threw it down a well. After this, he returned to the couch, and laid down, putting his cimiter by his side under the coverlet. He remainded there, waiting patiently the return of the enchantress.

After beating her husband barbarously, the inhuman queen entered the Palace of Tears, and, approaching the couch where the sultan lay concealed by the covering, she began to lament the deplorable state and long silence of her favourite.

"My life, my soul," said she, "will you never speak one word to me? Will you always be silent?"

The sultan feigned as if he had that moment awoke from a long sleep, and, imitating the language of the blacks, answered the queen in a solemn tone:—

"There is no power but in Alla alone, who is Almighty."

The enchantress gave a loud cry for joy at hearing him speak so unexpectedly. "Is it possible," said she, "that you are able to speak to me once more?"

"Unhappy wretch," replied the sultan, "do you deserve that I should speak to you?"

"Alas!" replied the queen, "why do you reproach me thus?"

"It is your cruel enchantments," replied the sultan, "that have prevented my cure: for the groans and sighs of your husband, whom you daily maltreat so barbarously, disturb me night and day. If he was disenchanted and set at liberty, I should recover my health."

"I am ready to obey all your commands," said the queen, "and will speedily restore the king to his former state."

The enchantress immediately left him, and went to the king her husband with a cup of water in her hand. Over this water she pronounced some magical words, which made the water bubble in the cup as if it boiled without the aid of fire.

She then approached her husband, and, sprinkling him with some of this water, said, in a loud voice:—

"If the Creator of all things formed thee as thou art at present, do not change; but if thou art in that condition merely by the force of my incantations, become as thou wert before."

She had scarcely uttered these words, when the king, finding himself in his former state, rose up

freely, and returned thanks to Alla for his deliverance.

The enchantress then said to him :—

"Get thee gone from this castle, and never return, under pain of death."

The young king immediately retired from her presence, but he withdrew to no great distance, as he supposed that this change had by some means been effected by his friend, the generous sultan.

The queen then hastened back to the Palace of Tears, and, drawing nigh to the couch, told the sultan that she had obeyed his commands, and set her husband at liberty.

"You have cured me of part of my disease, it is true," replied the sultan, still counterfeiting the language of the blacks; "but, to complete my cure, you must restore the city, the four isles, and all the inhabitants, to their natural state.

"The fish, every night at midnight, raise their heads out of the pond, and cry for vengeance against you and me. This likewise causes the delay of my cure. Go speedily and repair the mischief you have done, and at your return I will give you my hand, and you shall assist me to rise."

The enchantress, filled with hopes from these words, cried out,—

"All your commands shall quickly be obeyed: I will hasten this moment to restore you to health."

Accordingly she went directly to the pond, and, taking a little water in the hollow of her hand, she had no sooner sprinkled it and pronounced her magic spells, than the city and islands were restored that instant. The fish became men, women, and children: Mahometans, Guebres, Christians, or Jews; slaves or freemen, as they were before, every one having recovered his natural form and situation. The houses and shops were immediately filled with their inhabitants, who found all things just as they were before the inchantment; and the sultan's numerous retinue were greatly astonished to find themselves in an instant encamped in the largest square of a populous city.

The moment the queen had effected this change she hastened back to the couch, where she supposed she had left the black.

"I come," said she, "to rejoice with you, on the restoration of your health. I have done all that you required. So give me your hand, and rise from your couch, as you promised."

"Come nearer," said the sultan, still imitating the language of the blacks. She came closer to him, upon which he suddenly arose, and, seizing her arm, with one blow of his cimiter killed her in an instant.

Leaving her body on the couch, he went directly in search of the King of the Black Isles, who waited for him with the greatest impatience. The sultan embraced the young king with the greatest affection, and bade him rejoice, for his cruel enemy was dead.

The King of the Black Isles returned him thanks in a transport of joy and gratitude, and declared, that he meant to leave his kingdom, and accompany the sultan to his dominions; for, after the services he had rendered him, he could not endure to part with his deliverer.

The sultan was delighted at finding that the young king, for whom he had taken a great affection, meant to remain with him; but assured him that there was no occasion to quit his dominions, since they were so near to his own, that they could see each other whenever they pleased.

"How!" said the young king, "do you believe yourself to be at present within a short distance of your own capital."

"Yes," said the sultan: "it is not more than three or four hours' journey from this place."

"I can easily believe that you came from your capital in the time you mention," replied the King of the Black Isles, "because the situation of my kingdom was changed by enchantment; but, now every thing is restored to its former state, you will find, that you will scarcely reach your own dominions in less than a year's journey."

The sultan was extremely surprised at finding that he was so far from his kingdom. "But," said he, "I do not regret the trouble I shall have to reach my own dominions, since I shall gain you for a son; for, as you are so obliging as to offer to attend me, and I am childless, I shall adopt you, and from this moment look upon you as my heir and successor."

The young king then proposed to his subjects one of his nearest relations for their monarch, and, to their great regret, departed with the sultan.

The young prince and the sultan arrived very happily at the end of their journey. They brought with them a hundred camels, loaded with inestimable riches, from the treasury of the Black Islands, and were received by the people of the capital city of the sultan with the greatest joy.

The next day after his arrival, the sultan acquainted his people with all the circumstances which had detained him so long from them. He likewise informed them, that he had adopted the young king of the Black Isles for his successor, who was willing to leave a great kingdom to be his heir. He then distributed various rewards to his subjects according to their rank, as acknowledgments for their loyalty during his long absence.

Nor was the poor fisherman forgotten, as he had been the first cause of the deliverance of the young king: the sultan gave him a plentiful estate, which made him happy for the rest of his days.

SINBAD THE SAILOR.

A POOR porter was passing through the streets of Bagdad one very hot day, under a heavy burden: he came, at length, to a portico where the pavement was sprinkled with rose-water, and a cool western breeze blew full in his face. As he was very weary and desirous of resting himself, he threw off his burden, and sat down under the shade of the portico, close to the open windows of a great house.

He was glad that he had chosen this resting-place, for an agreeable perfume of aloes and pastiles came from the windows, together with the sound of music and the melody of singing birds. From this charming concert, and the smell of various sorts of viands, the porter supposed there was a costly banquet preparing in the mansion. As he did not remember the name of the owner of the house, he asked one of the servants who stood in the portico, who lived there? "How," said the man, "is it possible that you live in Bagdad and know not that this is the house of my master,

Sinbad, the great sailor, that famous voyager, who has sailed round the world *?"

The porter, who had heard the fame of Sinbad's riches, was seized with envy at comparing his grandeur with his own miserable condition. In this frame of mind, he raised his eyes to heaven and complained aloud,—"Almighty Creator of the universe, consider the difference between my lot and that of Sinbad. I am every day exposed to hardships and fatigues, whilst this happy Sinbad leads a life of continual pleasure. What has he done to obtain from thee a destiny so agreeable? And what have I done to deserve one so miserable?"

The porter had scarcely finished this expostulation, when a servant came out of the house, and told him that his master wished to speak to him. The poor man would willingly have excused himself, for he feared that Sinbad had overheard his complaints, and meant to punish him; however, the servant would take no denial, and he was obliged to follow him into the house. They presently entered a magnificent saloon, at the upper

* The Arabians must have had very confined notions of the world, when we consider that Sinbad only sailed in the Indian Ocean.

end of which sat Sinbad, who was a man somewhat advanced in years, of a very majestic appearance. He immediately asked the porter if he was the man whom he had heard bewailing himself under the window. He acknowledged that he was the same. Sinbad then demanded his name and business.

He said that his name was Hindbad, and that he was one of the poorest porters in Bagdad, adding, that he hoped Sinbad would consider his misery with compassion, and not resent the indiscreet expressions he had used when repining at his own laborious lot.

"I am not angry with you," replied Sinbad, mildly, "but I am anxious to undeceive you respecting the partiality of Providence in our several destinies. The riches I possess, which occasion you so much repining, were gained by extreme toil and danger. Sit down and refresh yourself, and, when I have given you an account of my voyages, I think you will acknowledge that my wealth was obtained by labours severer than your own."

After the porter had been regaled with a sumptuous banquet, Sinbad began to relate the particulars of his first voyage, as follows ;—

FIRST VOYAGE.

My father left me a good estate, which I inconsiderately wasted in the pursuit of pleasure. When I had nearly expended my own patrimony, I became alarmed by the approaches of poverty, and determined to seek some profession by which I could avoid so great an evil. With this intention, I sold the small remainder of my property, and purchased merchandize, with which I meant to trade in the Indian Ocean.

I sailed, in company with several other merchants, from the port of Balsora*, through the Persian Gulf, which is formed by the coasts of Arabia Felix, on the right hand, and by the shores of Persia on the left. We entered the Indian Ocean and touched at several islands, where we sold or exchanged our commodities.

One day we were becalmed, near a little island which was almost level with the surface of the

* Balsora, or Basra, is a celebrated port in the Persian Gulf. It is about a day's journey from the mouth of the Tigris, and stands on a stony soil, as the word basra imports in Arabic. Through this city the richest commodities of India pass to Arabia and Persia.

water, and resembled a green meadow. The captain of our ship had a boat lowered, and permitted me, with several others, to land on this island.

We kindled a fire, and began to cook some provisions we had brought from the ship; but, while we were diverting ourselves and eating and drinking, the island began suddenly to tremble beneath our feet. We now found that we had mistaken an enormous whale for an island, and that, directly the creature felt the heat of the fire we had kindled, she began to put herself in motion.

Some betook themselves to swimming, others got into the boat; but, for my part, I was still on the back of the whale, when she dived into the sea, and had only time to cling to a piece of wood we had brought from the ship for the purpose of making a fire. The captain and crew did not perceive my danger, for, after they had received the boat and taken in those that swam, a favourable breeze sprang up, and they hoisted all their sails and pursued their voyage.

Thus was I exposed to the mercy of the waves. I struggled hard for life all that night, and next morning, when I found my strength gone, a billow threw me luckily on an island. Here I found

both wholesome fruits and fresh water, and, after I had refreshed myself, I climbed a very large tree, in order to look about me. I found that the island was totally uninhabited, but, looking towards the sea-shore, I discovered, at a distance, something very large, that had a white appearance, like a bowl of prodigious size. I approached it, and found that it was very hard and smooth, and at least fifty paces round. Presently the sun became suddenly darkened, as if it was covered with a very thick cloud. I was much surprised at this obscurity, and the more so when I found it was occasioned by a bird of monstrous size, that came flying towards me. I remembered, then, hearing mariners speak of an enormous bird called the roc*, and I presumed that this was one, and the round bowl must be its egg. In short, the roc presently alighted, and sat over the egg to hatch it. As I perceived her coming, I crept close to the egg, so that I had before me one of the legs of the bird, which was as large as the trunk of a

* Marco Polo, an Italian traveller, who spent many years in the east, makes mention of the roc; and he says that this bird is large enough to carry away an elephant—but Marco Polo is much given to romancing.

tree. I tied myself strongly to it with my turban, in hopes that, when the roc flew, she would carry me with her out of this desert island. The bird flew away the next morning, and carried me so high that I lost sight of the earth; she afterwards descended suddenly, with so much rapidity, that I lost my senses. But when the roc alighted on the ground, I recovered myself, and speedily untied the knot, and set myself at liberty. Directly I had done this, the bird took a monstrous serpent in her bill, and flew away.

The place where the roc left me was a very deep valley, encompassed with mountains so high, they seemed to reach to the clouds; so that there was no outlet by which I could escape from the valley. When I compared this place with the desert island, I found that I had gained nothing by the change. As I walked through the valley, however, I perceived the bottom was strewed with diamonds of a surprising bigness. I took a great deal of pleasure in looking upon them, but my satisfaction was much diminished when I saw, at a little distance, in the clefts of the rock, serpents of such a size, that the smallest of them were capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the daytime to their dens, where they hid themselves

from the roc, their enemy, and only came abroad in the night.

I spent the day in walking about the valley; but, when night came on, I went into a cave, and stopped the mouth with a stone. I supped on some fruits I had brought from the island in my girdle; but I heard the serpents hissing about my cave, which put me in such fear that I could not sleep all night.

When day appeared, the serpents retired, and I came out of my cave, trembling. I walked a long time over diamonds, without wishing to touch them. I was presently startled by something heavy that fell close by me, and I found it was a large piece of meat, that had been thrown from the tops of the surrounding rocks.

This piece of meat was followed by several others, which were thrown by merchants from the top of the rocks, for they had no other way of getting at the diamonds, but going to the top of the rocks that overhung the valley, and throwing pieces of flesh into the depth below. The diamonds on whose points they fall stick to the meat, and the eagles (which are of immense strength in that country), carry off the flesh, to

feed their young ones. The merchants then frighten the eagles from their nests, and take away the diamonds that adhere to the meat.

I had believed till then that it was impossible to escape from the valley, but I now formed a plan to save my life, which I put immediately into execution. I began to gather up the largest diamonds I could find, of which I secured a great number in my sash; I then took the largest piece of meat I could find, tied myself fast to it with the cloth of my turban, and laid myself on the ground, with my face downwards. I had scarcely laid down, when the eagles came, and one of the strongest took me up, with the piece of meat on my back, and carried me to his nest, on the top of the mountain.

The merchants immediately began to shout, in order to frighten the eagles, and, when they had obliged them to quit their prey, one of the party came to the nest where I was. He was much alarmed when he saw me, but presently, instead of inquiring how I came there, he began to quarrel, and asked, "Why I stole his property?"

"You will treat me with more civility," said I, "when you know me better. I have diamonds

enough for us both; if the other merchants gain any, it is but by accident, while I have chosen the largest from the bottom of the valley."

I then showed him a few, which I took from my girdle; he was astonished at their size and beauty, and assured me that, in all the courts he had visited, he had never seen any to compare to them in bigness or lustre. As the nest to which I was carried belonged to this merchant, I offered him as many of my diamonds as he chose to take; but he contented himself with one, and that not the largest, which he declared would raise him a fortune sufficient for his desires.

The other merchants then came round us: I told them my story, and they greatly admired both my courage and the stratagem I used to save my life. The merchants took me to their quarters, and treated me very kindly. When they had gained as many diamonds from the valley as they wished, I travelled homewards in their company.

We embarked at the first port, and arrived at the isle of Roha, where the trees grow that yield camphor. This tree is so large, and the branches so thick, that a hundred men may sit under the shade. The juice runs out of the tree from a

hole that is bored in the trunk, and hardens into camphor; and, when it is all drawn out, the tree withers and dies.

I pass over many things relating to this island, lest I should be tedious. I exchanged here some of my diamonds for valuable merchandize, and embarked for Balsora. From this place I went to Bagdad, where I arrived safely, with immense riches. I immediately gave great alms to the poor, and lived splendidly upon the wealth I had gained with such danger and fatigue.

Here Sinbad ceased speaking; and, when he had thus ended the particulars of his first voyage, he gave Hindbad a purse, in which was a hundred sequins, and bade him return at the same time next day, when he would give him an account of his second voyage.

The porter went home, transported with joy at his good fortune, and his family did not fail to return thanks to Heaven for the relief Providence had sent them by the hands of Sinbad.

The next day Hindbad returned to the house of the bountiful voyager, who thus proceeded with his adventures.

SECOND VOYAGE.

THE desire of visiting foreign countries soon effaced the remembrance of the dangers of my former voyage, and I began to be impatient of leading an indolent life; I therefore purchased a large stock of merchandize, and proceeded to Balsora, where I again embarked. After a long navigation, we were overtaken by a violent tempest, in the main ocean, which drove us out of our course, and brought us into the port of an island, where the captain was very unwilling to cast anchor. He told us that this and some other islands were inhabited by savages, who were dwarfs, but of amazing strength, and so numerous, that it was vain to make any resistance, for, if we happened to kill one of them, they would murder every man in the ship. We soon found that he told us truth; for an innumerable multitude of little savages, not more than two feet in height, and covered with red hair, came swimming to the ship. These mischievous creatures directly seized upon our vessel, and put us ashore on a neighbouring island, where they left us, and carried away the ship to the place they inhabited. We went for-

ward, till we came to a large pile of building, that had a gate immensely high, made of ebony. We entered into a court that led to a vast apartment, which had a large fireplace; on one side lay several spits for roasting, and on the other a great many dead men's bones. While we were gazing on this dreadful spectacle, a horrible black giant entered the room, who was as tall as a palm-tree: he had but one eye, and that was in the middle of his forehead, as red as a burning coal; his fore teeth were very long and sharp, and stuck out of his mouth, which was as deep as that of a horse; his under lip hung down upon his breast; his ears resembled those of an elephant, and covered his shoulders; and his nails were as long and crooked as the talons of a vulture. At the sight of so frightful a giant, we became insensible from terror.

When we regained our senses, we saw the monster looking at us attentively; at last he seized me, and, holding me by the nape of my neck, he turned me round, as a cook would examine a fowl, but, finding that I was too lean, he let me go. He then took the captain, and, seeing that he was the fattest of the party, he killed him as easily as I could kill a sparrow; then, thrusting

a spit through him, he kindled a fire, and roasted and devoured him for supper. After this atrocious meal, he locked the door, laid himself down to sleep, and snored louder than thunder. You may suppose it was not in our power to close our eyes; but, instead of resting, we passed the night in the most bitter lamentations.

When day broke, the giant rose up, went out, and locked the door after him; leaving us unhappy prisoners abandoned to the most frightful despair.

The giant failed not to return in the evening, when he again made his supper on one of our unhappy companions: he left us as usual in the morning. You may, perhaps, imagine that we suffered from hunger, but we found plenty of rice and fruit in the apartment; yet terror and despair took from us all inclination for eating. Some of our company proposed that we should kill one another, to avoid a death so horrible, and so abhorred a grave as the stomach of a barbarous cannibal. I would not agree to this proposal, but advised my comrades to form some bold project, by which we might rid ourselves of this gluttonous monster.

That night we had the anguish of seeing ano-

ther of our companions devoured; but we at last punished the cruel giant. After he had made an end of this shocking meal, he laid down, as usual, on his back, and fell asleep; as soon as we heard him snore, nine of the boldest of our number, with myself, took each of us a spit, and blinded him, by all thrusting them into his eye at once: the pain occasioned him to raise a frightful cry, and to rise and stretch out his hands to find us, in order to sacrifice some of us to his rage; but we easily avoided him. Having searched for us in vain, he groped for the gate, and went out, howling dreadfully; fortunately, he left the entrance unfastened, and we instantly quitted his abominable den, and ran down to the shore. Here we found plenty of timber fit for rafts, and, the night being moonlight, we formed, as well as we could, a few floats, on which we determined to commit ourselves to the mercy of the waves. We had scarcely finished these rafts, when the sun rose, and we saw our cruel enemy appear, led by two other giants, of the same monstrous size as himself. We immediately launched our floats, got on them as quickly as possible, and put out to sea. As soon as these new allies of our enemy perceived our

escape, they ran to the beach, and, seizing great stones,* threw them with so exact an aim at our rafts, that they sunk every one but that which I was on; and all my companions were drowned, except two who were with me on my raft. We rowed with all our might, and at last got out of the reach of the giants; but we were exposed, in a frightful manner, to the violence of the winds and waves, which tossed us about for a day and night. The next morning we had the good luck to be thrown on an island. We found here plenty of cocoa-nuts, which greatly refreshed us, and we soon recovered our strength.

In the evening we laid down to sleep on the sea-beach, but we were awoke by the hissing of a serpent close by us. He seemed of an enormous size, and his scales made a loud rustling as he crept along. He seized one of my comrades, notwithstanding his loud cries, and the violent efforts he made to rid himself of the serpent; for the horrid reptile, by shaking him several times against the ground, killed him, and we could hear him crush

* The whole of this story bears such a strong resemblance to the adventures of Ulysses, in Homer's Odyssey, that the likeness cannot be accidental.

the bones of the poor victim after we had fled to a great distance.

We passed the next day in the utmost horror, and towards night, when we expected the serpent would again come abroad, we climbed a large tree, where we hoped that we should be safe from his attacks. A little while after, the serpent came hissing to the root of the tree, raised itself up against the trunk, and, meeting with my companion, who sat somewhat lower than I did, he swallowed him at once, and went away.

I sat upon the tree, expecting the same fate as my companions, till day dawned, and then came down, more dead than alive.

When I had a little recovered my spirits, I gathered together a large quantity of faggots and brambles, and made with them a strong enclosure round the trunk of the tree; and I secured the top by tying down the branches of the tree to meet the wall that encircled it, and then weaving brushwood to form a strong roof. In the evening I retired within this fence, and the serpent did not fail to come at the usual hour, to devour me, but was prevented by the rampart I had formed. He went round the tree many times, and tried to force every weak place in my enclosure, but he found

it was in vain; he then coiled himself round the whole of my fortress, and encircled it till day-break, waiting for my appearance as a cat watches for a mouse that has retired to a place of security. When day broke, the reptile returned to his den, but I dared not venture from my enclosure till the sun was high in the heavens.

I suffered so much from the poisonous breath of the serpent, and the terror I had undergone during the night, that I scarcely wished to prolong my life. Going down to the sea-shore in this gloomy frame of mind, you may suppose there was an instant change in my feelings on beholding a ship at a distance! I immediately unfolded the linen of my turban, and made all the signals I could to attract attention. Fortunately, the captain discovered me, and instantly sent a boat to fetch me from the island. When I arrived on deck, the merchants and seamen crowded round me, and testified the greatest astonishment at my escape from this cluster of islands, which were much dreaded by mariners on account of the giants and savages that dwelt in some, and the serpents that infested others; few sailors who were so unhappy as to be cast on these islands ever returning to tell the tale of their horrors.

The ship that had received me was bound to the isle of Salabat, on which grows a wood called sanders, famous in medicine. We took in a store of this wood, and cloves, cinnamon, and nutmegs. As I had lost every thing in my voyage, and could at present obtain no remittances from Bagdad, the captain employed me as his factor: being a very ready accountant, I gained a great deal of business in this way during my stay on the island.

One day, the captain of a ship which had lately entered the port employed me to sell a parcel of goods, that he said belonged to a merchant who had sailed with him, but had lost his life by an accident. He begged me to make the utmost advantage of them, as he wished to improve the poor man's property, and give a just account to his heirs. I asked him in whose name I was to sell the goods, and was much astonished to hear him answer, Sinbad the sailor! I looked steadfastly at him, and then remembered that he was the same captain with whom I had sailed in my first voyage, and I found that he was now returning home.

I made myself known to him, and told him the particulars of my escape, when he thought me drowned in my adventure with the whale. The good man then remembered me, and gave me a

very honest account of my property, which he had greatly improved. I changed these goods for the commodities of the country, and we then set sail for Balsora, where we arrived safely, and I sold my spices at an immense profit; so that, when I returned to Bagdad, I added considerably to the great riches I had left in that city.

Again I distributed plentiful alms to the poor, and indulged myself by resting some months, and living generously, to recruit my strength after the fatigues I had undergone.

At the conclusion of this narrative, Sinbad presented the porter with another purse of one hundred sequins, and invited him to hear the particulars of his next voyage.

THIRD VOYAGE.

I WAS soon disgusted with the pleasures of a luxurious life. I was then in the flower of my age, and preferred roving from isle to isle, and encountering all the dangers of my hazardous voyages, to dwelling in Bagdad and quietly enjoying my great wealth. I soon freighted a ship, and set sail in quest of new adventures; but, I must own, the first I met with was not a very agreeable

one. We had the misfortune to be wrecked on a rocky coast; our ship and every thing in her was lost, and we with some difficulty saved our lives by swimming ashore. Here we were directly made prisoners by the black inhabitants of the country. These people gave us, with other food, a certain herb, which my companions ate without suspicion; but I, who noticed that the blacks did not touch it themselves, forbore to eat any. I soon perceived the ill effects of this herb, for it deprived my friends so completely of their reason, that they neither knew what they said or did.

The blacks gave them this intoxicating herb, that they might not perceive the cruel destiny to which they were reserved, which was being fattened and killed for food. They fed us with cocoa-nut oil and rice; my companions devoured this food very greedily, but I only took just enough to sustain life. The blacks killed my poor shipmates as they grew fat; but I became leaner every day, and at last fell into a languishing distemper, which the blacks perceiving, spared my life, till I recovered my health.

Meanwhile, as I had my liberty, I speedily took an opportunity of making my escape. I journeyed for three days along the sea-shore,

without meeting any hordes of these savage people, and on the fourth day fell in with a party of white men, who were gathering pepper. These people received me very courteously, and I was delighted when I found they spoke Arabic. I helped them with their labour, till they had gathered a sufficient quantity of pepper, and then sailed with them to their own country. They presented me to their king, who was a most amiable man, and took great pleasure in hearing my adventures. I taught his subjects many arts that before were totally unknown to them, which so greatly pleased this good prince, that he bestowed on me both riches and honours, and gave me in marriage a most beautiful and noble lady, who possessed a great estate. I loved my wife, and we lived in great harmony for about a year after my marriage, when I made a discovery which ruined my happiness.

The wife of a man who lived near me happened to die. As I was on the most friendly terms with this neighbour, I called at his house to condole with him on his loss. Seeing him absorbed in affliction, I said to him, as I entered, "God preserve you, and grant you a long life."

"Alas!" replied he, "how can you mention long life to me, when my days are at an end?"

"Pray," said I, "do not indulge yourself in such melancholy fancies. You are in excellent health, and I shall doubtlessly enjoy your company for many years."

"I hope," replied my friend, with a sorrowful air, "that you may be blessed with a long life; but, as for me, my hour is come, for I must be buried this day with my dead wife. This law our ancestors established in the country, and it has always been observed inviolably. The living wife is interred with the dead husband *, and the living husband with the dead wife: nothing can save me, for every one must submit to this law."

While he was yet giving me an account of this custom, the very mention of which greatly alarmed me, his kindred and friends came to assist at this double funeral. They attired the dead wife in her richest apparel, and decked her with jewels as if it had been her wedding-day. They then

* It is supposed that the Arabian author alludes in this passage to the absurd and cruel custom of the Gentoos, who burn the living wife with the dead body of her husband.

laid her in an open coffin, and began their march to the place of burial. The husband followed directly after the corpse. They at length ascended a very high mountain, which reached to the sea-shore, and, taking up a large stone that covered the mouth of a deep pit, they lowered the corpse into the abyss, with all its rich apparel and jewels. The husband then suffered himself to be put into another open coffin, with a pot of water and seven little loaves, and was let down into the chasm. This ceremony being finished, they replaced the stone, and returned to the city.

The inhabitants of this country were so accustomed to this dreadful scene, that they viewed it without the least emotion; for my part, I was overwhelmed with affliction. In a little time I sought an interview with the king, and failed not to remonstrate against the cruelty of this law.

"It is a law," said the king, in reply to my representations, "that has been established for ages; and, therefore, must remain for ever unbroken. Even I must submit to it, if I should chance to survive my queen."

"But may I ask your majesty," said I, "if strangers are exempted from this law."

"Certainly not," replied the monarch, smiling

at my reasons for the question; "certainly not: if they are married in the country, they must comply with the general custom."

I was from this time in continual fear, lest my wife should die before me, and I should be buried alive with her body. I trembled at the least indisposition that attacked her, and, if her little finger but ached, I nursed her with the most assiduous care. But all my anxiety could not prolong her life, for she suddenly fell sick, and died in a very few hours.

You may judge my sorrow at the fatal consequences of this event: to be buried alive seemed to me worse than being devoured by cannibals.

The king and all his court chose to dignify my funeral by their presence,—an honour for which I felt very little gratitude.

The cavalcade set forward for the mountain, carrying the corpse at their head, dressed in all her jewels and magnificent attire. I followed the coffin on foot, with my eyes full of tears, as second actor in this doleful tragedy. When we arrived at the chasm, I made an effort to move the pity of the spectators, and, addressing myself to the king, implored him to take compassion on an unhappy stranger, who, being a foreigner, had no

right to submit to this unnatural custom. This appeal was useless, for, had the king been inclined to spare me, his people would not have suffered him to break the law.

Greatly scandalized at my resistance to this old-established ceremony, the crowd hastened to lower the body of my wife; then putting me by force into an open coffin, with a vessel of water and seven loaves of bread, they let me down into the pit, notwithstanding my bitter cries and lamentations.

I immediately smelt an insufferable stench, proceeding from the great multitude of dead bodies that surrounded me. However, I left my coffin, and, retreating to some distance, I threw myself on the ground, and began to bewail my sad destiny.

"Oh!" cried I, "would that I had perished in some of those tempests that I escaped; then my death had not been so lingering and terrible in all its circumstances. Ah, wretch that I am! have I not drawn this sad destiny upon myself, by my own restless disposition. Ought not I to have staid quietly at home, and enjoyed the wealth Providence had sent me?"

Notwithstanding my desperate condition, I had

an earnest desire to prolong my life, and, when I became hungry, I searched for my coffin, and satisfied my wants with some of the bread it contained.

By the little light that came from some fissures above, I perceived that this cave was of vast length, and about fifty fathoms high, and the rows of coffins extended a great way both to the right and left.

I lived for some days in this dismal abyss on my little store of bread and water, till it was all exhausted; and then I laid down on the ground, hoping that death would put a speedy end to my miseries. Whilst I lay overwhelmed with these sad thoughts, I distinctly heard something breathe hard and pant close by me. I started up, and approached the spot from whence the noise came, and then some animal seemed to run from the place. I followed the sound of its footsteps as fast as I could; sometimes it stopped for a little while, but when I drew near it always fled before me. After pursuing it a long time, I perceived a star, that seemed to glimmer through the darkness at a great distance. This star grew larger and larger as I approached nearer, and I presently heard the beating of waves on the sea-shore, and

discovered that the star was the light that came from a hole in the rock, through which a man might easily pass*.

* The Arabian author has again borrowed from the rich stores of Grecian literature, and taken the escape of Sinbad from the story of Aristomenes, the Messenian patriot; as this passage of history may be unknown to the youthful reader, perhaps an extract from Mr. Taylor's translation of the Greek historian, Pausanias, may be acceptable:—

"The Lacedæmonians, having taken Aristomenes alive, together with fifty of his men, determined to throw all of them into the *leadas*, or deep chasm, into which the most criminal offenders were hurled. All the other Messenians perished after this manner: but some God, who had so often preserved Aristomenes, delivered him from the fury of the Spartans; and some, who entertain the most magnificent idea of his character, say that an eagle, flying to him, bore him on its wings to the bottom of the chasm, so that he sustained no injury from the fall.

"As he lay in this profound abyss wrapped in his robe, and expecting nothing but death, he heard a noise on the third day, and, uncovering his face (for he was now able to look through the darkness), he perceived a fox near one of the dead bodies. Considering, therefore, where the passage could be, through which the beast had entered, he waited till the fox came nearer to him, and, when this happened, caught it with one of his hands, and with the other exposed his robe, as often as the animal turned to attack him, for it

When I emerged into the light of day, I found myself at the foot of the mountain, on the sea-beach, and observed that the creature which had guided me out of this frightful abyss was an animal that came out of the sea, and entered that hole to devour the dead bodies.

This mountain was situated between the town and the sea: but a high ridge of rocks cut off all communication with the inhabitants of the town, and sheltered me from their observations.

After my first emotions of joy and gratitude for my wonderful escape were over, I returned to the cave again, and searched among the biers for all the diamonds, pearls, and rubies, I could find; these I packed in some rich stuffs, which I took from that cave of death, and brought an immense treasure to the sea-beach. In a very few hours I

to seize. At length, the fox beginning to run away, he suffered himself to be drawn along by her, through places almost impervious, till he saw a light streaming through a hole, just large enough for the fox to pass through; and the animal, indeed, when she was freed from Aristomenes, betook herself to her usual place of retreat: but Aristomenes, as the opening was not sufficiently large for him to pass through, enlarged it with his hands, and escaped safe to Ira."—*Taylor's Translation of Pausanias*, vol. 1, p. 390.

descried a ship coming out of the harbour, and passing close to the shore. I called as loud as I could, and made signals of distress, upon which the mariners lowered a boat to fetch me. Fortunately, the captain was my own countryman, and bound to one of our native ports. He was so well pleased with having saved me, when he heard the particulars of my story, that he generously refused some valuable jewels, which I offered him as payment for my passage.

After a prosperous voyage, I arrived happily at Bagdad, with a profusion of wealth. Out of thankfulness to Alla for his great mercies, I gave large sums to several mosques, and distributed part of my abundance to the poor. I then reposed after my fatigues, and enjoyed myself a long time among my kindred and friends.

When Sinbad had finished relating the surprising incidents of his third voyage, he gave Hindbad another purse of one hundred sequins, and invited him to hear the remainder of his adventures: and, for the sake of brevity, I must observe that he made him a similar present at the end of every narration.

FOURTH VOYAGE.

It was a long time before my danger in the cave was thoroughly effaced from my mind; indeed, all my friends supposed that adventure had cured me of my passion for wandering; but at last my roving disposition returned upon me, and I determined on another expedition. Accordingly, I went to the nearest seaport, and had a ship built at my expense, for I wished to have her entirely at my own command, without being dependent on a captain. When my ship was ready for sea, I received on board several foreign merchants and their goods, and set sail with the first fair wind.

We touched at a desert island, to procure some water, after we had been at sea some weeks. While the sailors were carrying the water on board, some of the merchants (who were passengers), in walking over the island, discovered the egg of a roc, equal in size to the one I mentioned in my first voyage. There was a young roc within, ready to be hatched, for the egg was chipped, and the bill began to appear.

In spite of my entreaties to the contrary, the

merchants broke this egg with hatchets, and, after pulling out the young roc, piece by piece, they roasted some of its flesh.

They had scarcely finished their meal, when there appeared in the air two black clouds, at a considerable distance; an old sailor, of great experience, cried out that these clouds were the male and female roc to which the egg belonged. This man persuaded us to reimbark without delay, lest some misfortune should befall us. We immediately took his advice, and set sail with all possible diligence.

In the meantime the rocs approached the island with frightful cries, which they redoubled when they found their egg broken and their young one destroyed. They suddenly disappeared; while we, dreading their vengeance, made all the haste we could to sail from the coast.

We had not lost sight of the island, when the rocs returned, bearing in their talons enormous masses of stone; when they came directly over my ship, they hovered, and one of them let fall a stone, but, by the dexterity of the steersman, who suddenly turned the ship by a motion of the helm, it missed us, and fell close by the ship, dividing the water till we could see to the bottom of the

ocean. The other roc, to our misfortune, threw a stone so exactly, that it split the ship into a thousand pieces; the mariners and passengers were either killed by the fall of the stone or ingulfed in the waves. The latter was my fate, but I fortunately caught a large piece of wreck; when I rose to the surface of the water, I supported myself with one hand and swam with the other, till I had the happiness to gain an island, on which I safely landed.

After I had rested myself, I surveyed the shore upon which Providence had cast me. The country was so beautiful, it appeared like a delicious garden: I saw the most stately trees, some bearing ripe, others green fruit; these trees were interspersed with rills of fresh pure water, which made a thousand windings between banks of the fairest flowers. I refreshed myself with the fruits, and reposed on the grass till I had slept away my fatigue, and then rose, to take a further survey of the island.

I had not walked far, before I saw an old man sitting on the banks of a rivulet. At first, I thought he was a person who, like myself, had been shipwrecked on the coast; I saluted him, but he only bowed his head a little, by way of answer. I then asked him what he did there,

but, instead of replying, he made signs for me to take him on my back, and carry him over the brook. I believed that he really stood in need of my help; so I took him on my back, and carried him across the rivulet, then stooped, and told him to get down: but this old man had no such intention, for he closed his legs tightly about my neck, and intimated, by his motions, that he chose I should carry him farther. I soon perceived the old wretch was by no means so decrepit as he appeared to be, and that his skin resembled the hide of a cow; I then made violent efforts to shake him off, but he proved too strong for me, and clasped my throat so straitly, as he sat on my shoulders, that I was nearly strangled, and fell down in a swoon. Notwithstanding my fainting, the ill-natured old fellow kept fast about my neck, but opened his legs a little, to suffer me to recover my breath. When I had done so, he thrust one of his feet against my stomach, and struck me so rudely on the side with the other, that I was forced to rise, against my will. He then made me carry him under the trees, forcing me to stop now and then to eat such fruit as we found; he never left me all day, and laid down with me to rest at night, always holding me fast whilst he

slept; and he was so cunning and so watchful, that I could never find him off his guard for a moment: every morning he pushed me to make me awake, and then kicked continually, till I got up and carried him about.

One day I found several large calebashes. I cleaned a large one, and pressed into it some of the grapes which abounded in this island; I then set my vessel in a convenient place, and left the juice to ferment; coming to this spot some days after, I drank some of the wine, and found it so strong, that it made me forget my troubles, and I began to sing and dance as I walked along.

The old man, perceiving the pleasant effect that this drink had on me, made a sign for me to give him some. I gave him the calebash, and, the liquor being agreeable to his palate, he drank every drop in the vessel; as there was sufficient to intoxicate him, the fumes of the liquor got into his head, and he began to sing in an odd manner, and to jump up and down, as he sat on my shoulders, as if he would dance; presently he grew so inebriated, that he lost all his strength, and relaxed his hold by degrees. I immediately perceived that this was the favourable moment for freeing myself from my tormentor; I threw him

with ease on the ground, and instantly killed him with a large stone.

Some days after I had thus ridded myself of this wicked old man, I saw a large party of people employed very busily among the trees; I advanced towards them, and found they were the crew of a vessel, who had landed on the island to cut aloes. The mariners were surprised to see me, and still more so when they heard my adventures. "You met with 'the old man of the sea,'" said the captain; "for so your tormentor was called; and you are the first person who ever escaped alive out of his hands. He has made this island famous by the number of men he has slain, so that merchants dared not land, to gather the precious commodity with which the place abounds, unless they came in a very large party."

The captain then offered to take me on board his ship, and advised me to cut down a quantity of aloes-wood,* which I might sell to great advantage in my own country.

* The aloes-wood, so often mentioned in oriental tales, is a tree growing in China and some of the Indian isles; it is called by naturalists xylo-aloes, and its trunk is composed of wood of three different colours, the heart of which is the perfume so much valued in the east, and considered

I immediately complied with this kind proposal; and, after we had loaded the ship with aloes, we left the island, and proceeded on our voyage.

We then approached two islands, where pepper grows in great abundance; here we sold a small quantity of our aloes, and exchanged some for pepper. We then sailed to the isle of Comari,* whose inhabitants have made an inviolable law to drink no wine, nor suffer any to be sold in their country: this coast is famous for pearl-fishing; I went with the other merchants, and hired divers, who brought me up a great quantity of pearls, which were very large and pure.

I then hired a vessel to transport me to Balsora, from whence I returned to Bagdad, where I made great sums by my pepper, aloes, and pearls. I

far more precious than gold. The Siamese ambassadors to the court of France brought some of this wood as a present to Louis XIV., in 1686, and were the first who made it known in Europe.

* Sinbad here means either Cape Comorin, the most southerly promontory of India, lying north-west of the island of Ceylon, or else the islands of Comara, which lie between the north end of the island of Madagascar and the coast of Zanguebar, from ten to fifteen degrees of south latitude.

gave a tenth part of my gains, as usual, to the poor, and added the remainder to the vast store of wealth I had left in my native city.

FIFTH VOYAGE.

After a year's rest, I prepared to tempt the sea once more, notwithstanding the prayers and entreaties of my friends, who did everything in their power to shake my resolution.

Instead of taking my way by the Persian Gulf, I travelled through several provinces of India, till I reached a distant seaport, where I embarked on board a ship which was destined to make a very long voyage.

After we had sailed for many months, the captain and pilot lost their course, so that it was many days before they could tell what part of the world we were in; when, at length, we discovered land, we had no great reason to rejoice, for, directly the captain remembered the coast, he rent his clothes and beard, and struck his breast, with all the marks of the deepest affliction. We demanded the reason of this strange conduct, and he immediately answered,—"The place we are approach-

ing is the most dangerous to mariners in the world: a rapid current hurries the ship with violence to the shore, where we shall be wrecked in a quarter of an hour."

He then caused the sails to be altered, and did everything in his power to change the direction of the vessel; but all to no purpose, for the sails rent, the tackling broke, and the ship was hurried, by irresistible force, to the foot of an inaccessible mountain, where she ran ashore, and broke to pieces; yet, the weather being fine, no lives were lost, and we saved our provisions and goods.

The captain then said to us:—"Every man may bid the world adieu, and dig his grave here; for we are in so fatal a place, that none shipwrecked on this spot ever return to their homes again." His words afflicted us mortally, and we all joined in bewailing our deplorable fate.

We found there was no possibility of climbing to the top of this mountain, or finding any outlet from the circle of rock that overhung the shore on which we were cast. The beach was covered with dead men's bones, the sight of which filled us with horror, as they plainly showed how many people had perished on this fatal spot. It is scarcely possible to tell the quantity of valuable

merchandize we saw scattered on the sands—the sad relics of former shipwrecks.

There are several singularities peculiar to this mountain, such as are to be met with in no other spot in the world: instead of common pebbles, the stones are rubies, topazes, emeralds, and other jewels of the most uncommon size and exquisite lustre; here, too, is thrown upon the desolate barren coast large quantities of ambergris, of the most valuable quality. In all other countries, rivers flow from their sources into the sea; but in this fatal place a large river of fresh water runs directly out of the sea into a dark cave, the entrance to which is an arch of stupendous height.

After we had tried in vain to scale the mountain and rocks, we supposed that escape was impossible, as the same current which had hurried our ship to inevitable destruction would prevent our leaving the coast with boats or rafts.

We therefore divided our provisions as equally as possible, and each person subsisted on his share for a shorter or longer time, according to his temperance.

I had been so long used to hardships and deprivation of every kind, that I required less food than my comrades; and I husbanded my provi-

sions so well, that I survived all the ship's company.

After I had interred the last of my unfortunate shipmates, I resolved to dig a grave for myself, and, when I had exhausted the small remainder of my provisions, to lie down in it, and wait there the approaches of death, as there was no person to perform the sad offices of burial for me.

You may suppose, while I was employed in digging my own grave, I did not fail to reproach myself with my folly in leaving my affectionate friends and kindred, and all the riches and comforts I possessed in my home, to wander into unknown regions.

Full of these sad reflections, I happened one day to approach the banks of the river I formerly mentioned; I considered this stream and the cave which ingulfed it with great attention. "This river, which runs underground," thought I, "must have some outlet: if I make a raft, and abandon myself to its current, it will either drown me or bring me to some more hospitable country; if I am drowned, which is the worst that can befall me, it is an easier death than perishing by famine."

The moment I had formed this resolution, I instantly set to work; as I had a large choice of

pieces of cable and timber, I soon made a very strong little float: when it was finished, I loaded it with rubies, emeralds, topazes, and ambergris. Having balanced my cargo exactly, and fastened it securely to the bottom of my raft, I stepped on board with two little oars I had made, and, after imploring the protection of Heaven, I committed myself to the guidance of the stream.

When I entered the cave, I lost the light of day, and I floated for nearly a week in total darkness; once I found the arch of the rock so low, that it struck my head, which made me very careful afterwards to avoid the like danger. All this time I ate no more than was just necessary to support nature; yet, notwithstanding this frugality, all my provisions were expended. Then a pleasing sleep seized upon me; but I cannot tell how long it continued, for when I awoke I found myself in the blessed light of day, lying on my float, which was tied to the side of a large river, on the banks of which were a great number of black people. Overjoyed at my deliverance, I could not help reciting these words aloud,—"Call on the Almighty, and he will help thee; shut thy eyes, and, whilst thou art asleep, he will change thy bad fortune into good."

One of the blacks, who understood Arabic, hearing me speak thus, came forward and said: "Brother, we came to-day to follow our usual employment, which is, to water our fields by digging canals from the river which issues out of this mountain. We perceived your raft floating on the water, and one of our company swam into the river, and fastened it to the bank, until you should awake. We are all anxious to know how you dared venture into a subterranean river, and from whence you come."

I immediately satisfied his curiosity, by relating my adventure: and, when I had finished, the friendly black declared it was the most surprising story he had ever heard; and told me, I must accompany them to their king, and let him hear, from my own lips, this extraordinary narrative.

When they had given me refreshments, of which I stood greatly in need, some of the blacks brought me a horse, and made me ride, while they walked by me to show me the way; and others followed, carrying my raft and cargo on their shoulders. In this manner, we entered the city of Serendib, for it was on that famous island* I had landed.

* The island of Serendib is now called Ceylon, and is

The king of Serendib received me most graciously, and listened to my tale with great attention. He appointed me apartments in his own palace, and entertained me most royally during my stay in his country. When I was about to depart for Bagdad, he expressed a wish that I should bear a letter of greeting from him, with some costly presents, to our caliph.

The king of Serendib ordered all the treasure I had brought on my raft (which he augmented by many costly gifts) to be put on board a ship, ready to sail for an Arabian port. He then sent

the richest island in the East Indies. It is two hundred and fifty miles in length, and two hundred in breadth, and abounds in the finest fruits and spices. It has mines full of precious stones, and many pearl-fisheries, and here are bred the largest elephants in the world. To counterbalance these lavish gifts of nature, the woods are infested by tigers of great fierceness, and the island is overrun by the most venemous reptiles, among which is the Anaconda, a tremendous serpent, of such enormous size that it has been known to kill and devour a tiger at a meal. Ceylon was first conquered by the celebrated Alberque, a great Portuguese admiral and discoverer. The Portuguese were expelled from their settlements by the Dutch, and the island is now under British government.

his letter, and the presents destined for the caliph, and, before I embarked, he commanded the captain of the ship to treat me with the respect due to his ambassador.

The letter from the king of Serendib was written in characters of azure, on the skin of an animal of great value. The contents were as follows:—

"The king of the Indies, before whose throne march one hundred elephants, whose palace shines with one hundred thousand rubies, and who has in his treasury twenty thousand crowns, enriched with diamonds, to Caliph * Haroun Alraschid.

* This great prince is so frequently mentioned in eastern tales, that it is necessary to give the youthful reader some account of him, independent of fiction.

He was the youngest son of the Caliph Mohadi, and ascended the throne of the caliphate, in the 170th year of the Higira, or the year of our Lord 786.

A caliph was both a spiritual and temporal prince, and, in quality of successor to Mahomet, held the most unbounded sway throughout the east.

Haroun Alraschid was the best and wisest prince that ever swayed the sceptre of the caliphate. He ruled over Syria, Arabia, Persia, Armenia, Palestine, Natolia, Media,

"Though the present we send you is inconsiderable, receive it, however, as a brother and friend, in consideration of the love we bear you, and of which we are willing to give you proof. We desire your friendship, considering it our due, being of the same dignity with yourself. Adieu."

The present consisted of a cup, made of an entire ruby, half-a-foot high and an inch thick, and filled with round pearls of a great size; the skin of a serpent, which preserved

Khorasan, Assyria, Great Bukharia, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, and many other provinces, so that his dominion extended much farther than the Roman empire had ever done.

Haroun was just, merciful, and generous, and history would have transmitted his name to posterity without a blot, if he had not, in a fit of ungovernable passion, caused the destruction of his faithful friend and vizier, Giafer, whom he put to death with his whole family.

Haroun was a great encourager of the arts and sciences; his capital was the seat of learning, when Europe was immersed in darkness and ignorance. He sent, among other curious presents, to the Emperor Charlemagne, the first clock that was ever seen in Europe.

History relates many anecdotes of this prince, as interesting as the fictitious tales in which his name is so frequently mentioned.

from sickness those who slept on it ; and a female slave, of great beauty, whose apparel was covered with jewels.

When I arrived at Bagdad, the first thing I did was to present myself to the commander of the faithful, with the letter and presents from the king of Serendib.

After the caliph had read the letter, he asked me if this prince was, in reality, so rich and powerful as his letter intimated.

I then rose from the ground, where I had prostrated myself before our monarch, and replied :—

" Commander of the faithful, I am witness that the king of Serendib does not exceed the truth.

" It is impossible to describe the magnificence of his palace, and, when he appears in public, he is seated on a throne which is fixed on the back of an elephant. One of his officers sits on the neck of the elephant, with a golden lance in his hand. Another stands behind the throne, bearing a column of gold, on the top of which is an emerald half a foot long and an inch thick.

" Before him march his guards, mounted on a hundred elephants ; and one of his retinue cries aloud,—' Behold the potent sultan of the Indies,

whose palace is covered with a hundred thousand rubies, and who possesses twenty thousand crowns of diamonds.' Then the officer who bears the column of gold replies—'This monarch so great must die! must die! must die!' To which the officer who guides the royal elephant answers—'Praise be to Him who lives for ever!'"

I then concluded by informing the caliph of the hospitality with which the king of Serendib, and all his subjects, had treated me.

The commander of the faithful was greatly pleased with my discourse, and dismissed me with a rich present.

SIXTH VOYAGE.

BEING safely returned from my last hazardous voyage, I now determined to pass the rest of my days at home, in peace and tranquillity. Such was my intention, but fortune had otherwise disposed of me, and I was again destined to endure new hardships and perils.

One day, as I was feasting with my friends, there arrived an officer from the palace, who in-

formed me that the caliph wished immediately to speak with me.

I hastened to obey my royal master, and was presently introduced into his presence. "Sinbad," said the caliph, "I have occasion for your services. You must carry an answer and present from me to the king of Serendib. You know it would not be suitable to my dignity for me to remain indebted to that prince."

Although I was unwilling to venture on another voyage, after the many dangers I had escaped, yet I did not choose to dispute the commands of my prince, but signified respectfully my intention of performing the commission with which he had honoured me.

The caliph was well pleased with my ready acquiescence, and presented me with a large sum of money for the expenses of my voyage.

I prepared for my departure in a few days, and sailed from Balsora, with the caliph's letter and presents.

I arrived at Serendib, after a prosperous voyage, and was welcomed by the king with the greatest marks of esteem. He received the letter and presents sent by the caliph, with the utmost

satisfaction, and was delighted to find that our monarch returned his friendship.

The caliph sent to this prince, as tokens of his goodwill, a beautiful vase of agate, on which was represented, in bas-relief, the figure of a man, who held a bow with an arrow, which he was ready to let fly at a lion. There was likewise a rich table, said to have belonged to the great Soloman, a robe of cloth of gold, with fifty robes of rich brocade, and a royal crimson bed.

After I had delivered these presents, I expressed a wish to return to Bagdad; but the king of Serendib took so much delight in hearing my various adventures, and had formed so warm a friendship for me, that it was with the greatest difficulty I could prevail on him to give me leave to depart. At length, he permitted me to embark for Bagdad, and, when I departed, gave me a valuable present.

My usual ill fortune still pursued me; for, in two or three days after we left Serendib, we were attacked by a pirate of such superior force to our own, that our ship was taken and plundered, and every person on board carried into slavery.

I was taken to a large town in India, and sold to a rich merchant, who, after he had purchased

me, asked me if I could shoot with the bow. I answered that archery was one of the exercises of my youth, and that I believed I had not yet forgotten the use of the bow.

He then took me behind him on an elephant, and we travelled to a large forest some leagues from the town. We advanced a long way into the forest, till my master stopped at the foot of a great tree, and told me to alight. When I had done so, he gave me a bow and arrows, and said:

"Climb into that tree, and shoot at the wild elephants, as you see them pass by. If you kill any of them, come to the town, and give me notice.

He then gave me food for several days, and returned to the town.

Next morning, by break of day, I saw a prodigious troop of elephants pass near my tree. I shot several arrows among them, and at last killed one. Directly the other elephants saw their companion fall, they retired into the thickest parts of the wood, and I descended from my tree, and hastened home to inform my master of my success. He came immediately to the forest, and took the elephants' tusks and teeth to trade with. He then greatly commended my diligence, and left me plenty of excellent provisions.

I continued to kill one of these animals every

day for upwards of a month, till, one morning, I perceived that, instead of crossing the forest by their usual path, the elephants approached the tree where I was concealed, in such immense numbers, that the ground shook beneath the tread of their feet. They all encompassed the tree where I sat, with their trunks extended, and their heads raised towards me, making at the same time a horrible noise.

At this frightful sight I shook with terror, and my bow and arrows dropped from my hand.

After the elephants had remained in this attitude for some time, the largest of them put his trunk round the root of the tree, and tore it up in a moment. I fell with the tree, but the elephant immediately picked me up with his trunk, and placed me on his back, where I sat, immoveable with fear and astonishment.

He then put himself at the head of his companions, who followed him in an immense troop, and entered the inmost recesses of the forest, till he reached a hill, entirely divested of trees, where laying me gently on the ground, he retired with the rest of the elephants. Conceive my astonishment when I rose up, and discovered that this hill was covered with the tusks and bones of these

animals. I admired the sagacity of the elephants, for this, I doubted not, was the place where they deposited their dead, and shed their tusks and teeth. I concluded that they carried me to this spot on purpose, to signify that I ought to forbear persecuting them, since I did it only for the sake of their tusks. For this reason, they showed me where I might procure plenty of ivory without taking their lives.

After I had a little recovered from my surprise, I prepared to return to the town, that I might communicate my discovery to my master. I had, however, proceeded on my journey no farther than the tree which the elephants had torn up, when I perceived my master standing, and looking at it very sorrowfully: as soon as I approached, he ran to meet me, and said,—"Ah! Sinbad, I came to bring you some provisions, and, when I saw your tree overthrown, and your bow and arrows on the ground, I thought the elephants had destroyed you. Tell me by what good fortune you have escaped their fury."

I told my master to follow me, and led him to the hill covered with ivory, where I related my adventure. He stood lost in astonishment at my story, and at the riches that lay before him. "Brother," said he, "I give you your freedom

from this hour; for I can no longer hold in slavery a person who has enriched me for life. I will besides send you to your native country, with a portion of this wealth that you have been the means of procuring for me."

I thanked my master for his liberal intentions, and, after I had assisted him to fill his warehouses with ivory, he loaded a ship with that valuable commodity, and presented the cargo to me, as a proof of his gratitude. We then parted, with mutual expressions of esteem, and I sailed for my own country, and arrived safely at Bagdad, after a speedy passage.

The caliph, who had been uneasy at my long absence, condescended to express great joy at my safe return. At his request I related to him the whole particulars of my last voyage, together with all my former adventures, with which he was so much surprised, that he caused my narrative to be written in letters of gold, and deposited among the archives of his kingdom.

Since this voyage I have remained in peace at home, honoured with my sovereign's esteem and favour, and surrounded by affectionate friends and kindred.

When Sinbad had finished his last voyage, he

said to the porter,—"Well, my friend, after all these perils and hardships, is it not reasonable that I should enjoy an easy and pleasant life?"

"My lord," replied Hindbad, "you not only deserve a quiet life, but you are likewise worthy of all the riches you possess, since you make such a good and generous use of them. May you continue to live in happiness and joy, till the day of your death."

Sinbad then presented him with one hundred more sequins, and told him to give up the employment of a porter, and come and dine every day at his table, for that he should all his life have reason to remember Sinbad the sailor.

THE THREE APPLES;

OR,

THE DANGERS OF FALSEHOOD.

THE caliph Haroun Alraschid one night summoned his grand vizier, Giafer, to attend him in a walk through Bagdad, that he might ascertain whether justice was properly administered to his people, and whether they were satisfied with his government.

For this purpose, Haroun and Giafer disguised themselves, and, attended by Mesrour, the favourite black slave of the caliph, they proceeded through the streets of Bagdad.

As they entered a small alley, they perceived, by the light of the moon, an old man carrying nets on his head; he had a folding basket of palm-leaves on his arm, and a club in his hand.

"This old man seems very poor," said the caliph; "let us stop and inquire into his circumstances."

"Honest man," said the vizier, "who art thou?"

"I am a fisher," replied he, "the poorest and most miserable of my trade. I have been casting my nets all day, and have not caught one fish; yet I have a wife and family depending on my daily labour for bread, who must all starve to-night."

The caliph was touched with compassion at the poor man's wretchedness, and said to him,—

"Hast thou courage to return to the river, and cast in thy nets once more? We will give thee a hundred sequins for whatever thou shalt chance to bring up."

"Directly he heard this proposal, the fisherman, forgetting his day's toil, led the way to the Tigris, saying, that he should consider himself amply rewarded if they only gave him a hundredth part of that sum.

The fisherman threw his nets into the river, and, when he drew them again, brought up a trunk, close shut, and very heavy. Giafer immediately, by his master's orders, paid the man a hundred sequins, and sent him away. The caliph was so eager to know what the trunk contained, that he commanded Mesrour to take it on his shoulder, and they all returned to the palace with the utmost speed.

When the trunk was opened, they found in it a large basket made of palm-leaves, and carefully sewed up with red thread. They then took out of the basket a bundle, wrapped up in a piece of tapestry, and, when this was opened, they discovered, to their great amazement, the dead body of a young lady, fairer than ivory, cut into four quarters. It is impossible to express the surprise of the caliph at this dreadful spectacle; but his astonishment was quickly changed into passion, and, darting an angry look at his vizier, he exclaimed,—

"Ah! thou wretch, is this thy careful inspection into the actions of my people? Do they commit such impious murders with impunity under thy government? If thou dost not immediately find the murderer of this woman, and punish him for his crime, I will cause thee and forty of thy kindred to be hanged."

"Commander of the faithful," replied Giafer, "I beg your majesty will grant me time to make inquiry for the murderer."

"I will grant thee only three days," said the caliph: "at the end of that time, produce the assassin, or thou shalt die in his place."

Giafer returned to his house, greatly troubled

in mind. "Alas!" said he, "how is it possible, that in so vast and populous a city as Bagdad, I should detect an unknown murderer, who most likely committed this crime without witnesses. Any prime minister but myself would cause some wretched person to be taken out of one of the prisons and put to death, in order to satisfy the caliph; but I will rather die than preserve my life by so base an action."

During three days, Giafer caused the strictest search to be made throughout Bagdad for the murderer, but at the end of that time he was forced to own to his master, that the person who had killed the young lady could not be found. The caliph, full of rage, instantly ordered that Giafer and forty more of the Bermecides, his kindred, should be hanged in the great square fronting the royal palace.

This sentence filled the people of Bagdad with the utmost grief for the noble Giafer* and his

* The amiable character given in this tale of Giafer and his kindred, the Bermecides, is fully confirmed and even exceeded by history.

This story evidently alludes to the same sentence which Haroun, in a fit of ungovernable fury, caused to be executed on Giafer and all his kindred. In this Arabian tale,

kindred. The Bermecides were universally beloved, not only in Bagdad, but throughout the whole caliphate, for their probity, bounty, and

the lives of the vizier and his noble kindred are spared, but the roll of historic records presents us with a more tragic conclusion.

Giafer was of the illustrious family of Bermec, and originally came from Persia. He was so much beloved by the caliph, and so charming in his conversation and manners, that his royal master would scarcely suffer him to be a moment out of his presence. Haroun had a favourite sister, called Abbasia, who was greatly celebrated for her wit and beauty, and for the charms of her conversation. Haroun wished much to have the pleasure of enjoying the company of this beloved sister, in the hours of relaxation, at the same time with his friend—a thing entirely contrary to the customs of the east. To obviate this difficulty, Haroun caused Giafer to marry the princess, but forbade them, under pain of death, to meet, except in his presence. Some time after, being assured that Giafer had privately entered the seraglio, and paid a visit to the princess his wife, unknown to him, he was so transported with passion, that, in the tempest of his rage, he caused the vizier to be strangled, and forty Bermecides, his kindred, to be hanged, and their habitations to be levelled to the ground. Haroun never owned that he repented of his desolating wrath, but it is said that he was never seen to smile after the death of his friend.

justice. When they were brought out for execution, there was nothing to be heard but sighs and lamentations from the surrounding multitude.

The lives of the most estimable people in the city were within a moment of being sacrificed, when a handsome young man, of the most prepossessing appearance, pressed through the crowd, and, approaching Giafer, kissed his hand, and said:

"Most excellent vizier, chief of the nobles of this court, and comforter of the poor, you are not guilty of the crime for which you are about to suffer: withdraw from this ignominious place, and let me expiate the death of the young lady found in the Tigris. It was I who murdered her, and I alone deserve punishment."

Before Giafer could answer, an old man of a very good mien approached, in great agitation:—

"My lord," said he, "do not believe this young man. It was I who killed the lady that was found in the trunk, and the punishment ought to fall solely on me."

The young man again protested that he was the murderer, which the old man positively denied, taking all the blame on himself.

This strange controversy obliged the grand vizier to carry them both before the caliph.

"Commander of the faithful," said Giafer, "I have brought before you two men, each of whom confesses himself to have been the sole murderer of the young lady."

The caliph then told the prisoners to declare which of them had committed this cruel murder. The young man affirmed, that he was the only person guilty, while the old man persisted in taking the crime on himself.

"Go, Giafer," said the caliph, "and cause them both to be hanged."

"But, if only one is guilty," said the vizier, "it would be unjust to take the lives of both."

At these words, the young man spoke again: "I swear, by him who has raised the heavens so high above the earth, that I am the man who killed the young lady, and threw her body into the Tigris."

Finding that the old man made no answer to this solemn protestation, the caliph turned to him, and asked what had induced him to take on himself the blame of so foul a murder.

"Commander of believers," said the old man, "I am advanced in years, and my days, by the course of nature, would soon be at an end; therefore, I was willing to sacrifice my life to save my

unhappy relative, who is more unfortunate than guilty."

These words induced the caliph to inquire into their story, and he commanded the young man to relate the circumstances which led him to commit this crime.

"Commander of the faithful," said the young man, "I must first inform your majesty, that the murdered lady was my wife, and this old man her father, who is likewise my uncle. I was left an orphan from a very early age, but my good uncle educated me with the affection of a father, and, when I grew up, gave me this unfortunate lady, his only daughter, in marriage. I must do her the justice to say, that she was chaste, affectionate, and good-tempered, and never gave me the least cause of offence in her life. We became the parents of three beautiful boys, and were exceedingly happy, till a fatal error caused me to commit this dreadful crime.

"About two months ago, my wife was attacked with a painful indisposition. During her illness I took the greatest care of her, and spared no expense to complete her cure: but the aid of me-

dicine was in vain, and she still continued in a languishing state.

"'Cousin,'" said she one day (for so she used to call me in a familiar manner), 'I have had for some time the greatest wish to eat some apples: I think if you could procure a few for me, I should get well directly I tasted them.'

"I went out immediately to purchase some apples, but, the season being over, I could not get one, though I searched all the markets and shops in Bagdad, and offered for them a sequin a-piece. I returned home much grieved at my ill success, and my wife, when she saw I had brought her no apples, was so uneasy that she could not sleep all night.

"In the morning I renewed my search, but in vain; at last, I met with an old gardener, who told me, that it was useless seeking for apples in Bagdad at that season of the year, but perhaps I might find some in your majesty's garden at Balsora.

"As I loved my wife too tenderly to neglect any thing that might restore her health, I immediately set out for Balsora, and travelled with such expedition, that I returned at the end of fifteen days with three beautiful apples, being all that

were left in your majesty's garden, which the gardener gave me, in consideration of a present I made him.

"My wife received them with pleasure, as tokens of my great affection; but her wish for eating apples was entirely over; so, without tasting them, she laid them down by her on the sofa.

"Some days after, as I was sitting in my shop at the bazaar, I saw an ugly black slave pass by with an apple in his hand, which I immediately knew to be one of those I had brought from Balsora, for I was well aware there was none to be had in Bagdad, or its neighbourhood. I called to the slave and asked him where he got that fine apple.

"'It is a present from a lady who loves me,' answered he, smiling. 'I went to visit her to-day, and found her indisposed. I saw three apples on the sofa by her, and she gave me one, saying that the good man, her husband, had made a journey to Balsora on purpose to fetch them for her, and that they had cost him a sequin each. We then had a collation together, and I brought away the apple you see.'

"This discourse drove me almost out of my senses. I ran home, and, entering my wife's

apartment, looked immediately for the apples, and, seeing only two, I asked what was become of the third. My wife, turning her head to the place where the apples were, and, seeing one was gone, replied coldly—'Cousin, I don't know where it is.'

"At this answer, I verily believed the tale of the black slave to be true, and, being beside myself with jealousy, I drew my poniard, and killed my unfortunate wife at a blow; I then packed her body in the trunk, and, when night came, sunk it in the Tigris.

"At my return, I found my eldest boy sitting on the threshold and weeping bitterly; I asked him the reason of his tears. 'Father,' said he, 'I took from my mother this morning, without her knowledge, one of those apples you brought her from Balsora. As I was playing at the door with my little brothers, a black slave that went by snatched the apple out of my hand; I ran after him, demanding it back, and told him it belonged to my mother, who was very sick, and that you made a journey to Balsora on purpose to fetch her three apples, which had cost you a great deal of money; but all I said was to no purpose, for the wicked slave would not give me the apple again.

As I still followed him, crying, he turned round and beat me, and then ran away so fast that I could not overtake him; I followed him till I lost my way, and it was dark before I found our street again. I have since been sitting here waiting your return, to pray you, dear father, not to tell my mother, lest it should make her worse.'

"These words of my innocent child pierced me to the very soul, for I now repented, too late, of having believed the calumnies of a vile slave, who had evidently invented his tale from what he had heard of my son.

"My uncle, here present, came just at that time to see his daughter, but, instead of finding her alive, heard from me that she was no more. I did not attempt to conceal any thing from him, but, without staying for his censure, owned myself the greatest criminal in the world.

"Upon this, instead of reproaching me, he joined his tears with mine, and we wept three days together without intermission; he for the loss of a daughter whom he had always loved tenderly, and I for the death of a dear wife, of whom I had deprived myself, by giving too easy credit to the words of a lying slave.

"This, commander of the faithful, is my sincere confession. You have now heard all the circumstances of my crime, and I beg you immediately to order my due punishment: however severe it may be, I shall not complain."

The caliph was lost in astonishment at the young man's singular story; but, considering that he was much to be pitied, he thought proper to pardon him.

"This wicked slave," said he, "is the sole cause of the murder, and he alone ought to be punished. Therefore," said the caliph to his grand vizier, "I give you, Giafer, three days to bring him to justice, and, if you fail to discover him in that time, you shall suffer death in his place."

This new order of the caliph was a terrible blow to the unfortunate Giafer, who thought that he had been out of danger. He durst not remonstrate with the caliph on his unreasonable sentence, for he knew too well the hasty temper of that prince. He returned to his home, where he spent three days in arranging his affairs, and taking leave of his family, who all bewailed bitterly the cruelty of the caliph.

Giafer was so fully convinced of the impossibi-

lity of finding out the guilty slave, that he never gave himself any trouble to discover him, but prepared for death, with the courage that became a brave man and an upright minister. On the third day, a party of the royal guards arrived, to bring the vizier before the caliph's throne. Giafer prepared to obey, but, as he was bidding a last farewell to his afflicted family, his youngest daughter, a little child, was presented to him by her nurses to receive his blessing.

As he had a particular love for this child, he prayed the guards to give him leave to stop a moment, and, taking his little girl in his arms, he kissed her tenderly several times: as he clasped her to his breast, he perceived she had something in her bosom that was very bulky. "My sweet little one," said Giafer, "what hast thou in thy bosom?"

"My dear father," replied the child, "it is an apple, upon which is written the name of our lord and master, the caliph. Our black slave, Rihan, sold it me for two sequins."

At the words, *apple* and *slave*, Giafer made an exclamation of joy and surprise, and, taking the apple out of his daughter's bosom, called hastily for the black slave. When he came, "Tell me

instantly," said the vizier, "from whence you got this apple."

"My lord," replied the slave, "I protest I neither stole it from your house, nor out of the caliph's garden: I took it the other day from a little boy who was playing at a door with two or three children. The boy ran after me, saying, that the apple belonged to his mother, who was sick, and that his father had made a long journey, only to get three apples for her, of which this was one. I did not give it back, but carried it home, where I sold it to the little lady your daughter, for two sequins."

Giafer was amazed to think that the roguery of a slave should have deprived an innocent lady of her life, and almost been the cause of his own death. He carried the slave with him before the caliph, and gave him an account of the singular chance which occasioned the detection of his crime.

The caliph immediately condemned the slave to death, and he suffered justly, for inventing a wicked calumny of an innocent person.

This tale is an instance of the wide-spreading mischief of falsehood. An untruth is always a great evil, and, even when spoken in jest, often occasions the most fatal consequences.

THE GENEROUS MAN.

ALL historians agree that the caliph Haroun Alraschid would have been one of the most perfect princes of his age, if his temper had not inclined him too much to anger and to vanity. It was a custom of his to say, that there was not a person in the world so generous as himself.

Giafer, his faithful vizier, could not bear his vain way of boasting: he took the liberty, one day, of reproving him. "Oh! my sovereign lord," said he, "leave it to your subjects, and the strangers who visit your court, to speak of your good qualities."

Haroun was provoked at this speech, and angrily demanded of his vizier, if he knew any one to compare to him in generosity.

"Yes, my prince," said Giafer, "in the city of Basra dwells a young man, called Abdalla; there is not a prince in the world, not even your majesty, that is so generous as this young man."

These words put the caliph in a great passion, and he would even have killed Giafer, if his wife,

the Princess Zobeide, had not persuaded him out of his rage.

He remained so angry, that he declared he would go himself to Basra, and, if he did not find Abdalla as generous a character as Giafer said, he would punish his vizier very severely.

Accordingly, he put on the dress of a merchant, and set off alone to Basra, and, after resting himself at an inn, he inquired the way to Abdalla's house. "How," said the person he asked, "is it possible you don't know the way to Abdalla's house?—You must be a stranger in Basra, I am sure: he is so good and generous, that his house is better known than the palace of the king."

The man then directed him to the dwelling of Abdalla. The house was very spacious, built of hewn stone, with a portal of polished green marble. Haroun entered the hall, and said to one of the slaves in waiting,—"I request the favour that you will tell the Lord Abdalla, that a stranger desires to speak to him."

The servant perceived, by the noble mien of Haroun, that he was a person of great distinction: he ran to tell his master of it, who immediately came down into the hall to receive the stranger, whom he took very courteously by the hand, and

led into a splendid saloon. The caliph told Abdalla, that he had heard him so advantageously spoken of, that he could not restrain the desire he had to visit him. Abdalla replied to his compliment in a very modest manner, and, having seated him on a sofa, he demanded of him from what country he came, and of what profession he was. The caliph made answer, that he was a merchant of Bagdad.

After a conversation of some time, there came into the hall twelve pages, carrying vases of rock crystal, with the most delicious liquors, enriched with rubies; these were followed by twelve female slaves, some of whom bore China basins heaped with fruits and flowers, and others with boxes of gold with conserves of an exquisite flavour.

When the hour of dinner arrived, Abdalla led the caliph into another hall, where there was a table furnished with the most delicate rarities; after dinner, Abdalla went out of the hall, and returned in a moment, bearing in one hand a wand, and in the other a little tree, the stem of which was of silver, with branches and leaves of emeralds; and the fruit, which hung thick on the tree, was made of large rubies. On the top of the tree stood a peacock of gold, finely wrought

in enamel, with which its natural colours were represented; and the body of the peacock was filled with aloes and amber, and other rich perfumes. He placed this tree at the feet of the caliph; then, touching the head of the peacock with his wand, the bird spread out its wings and tail, and whirled round with incredible swiftness, and, as fast as it turned, the perfumes issued out of all parts of his body, and scattered their odours through the hall.

The attention of the caliph was wholly employed on the tree and peacock, and, while his eyes were fixed with admiration on it, Abdalla bore them suddenly from his sight. Haroun was not a little provoked at this conduct, and said within himself,—"This young man does not understand politeness so well as I imagined: he snatches from my presence the tree and the peacock, while he sees me intent upon them. I suppose he is afraid I should ask for them. I see Giafer was mistaken in him."

While he was taken up with these thoughts, Abdalla returned a second time into the hall, accompanied by a little page, as beautiful as the sun. This lovely child was arrayed in a robe of cloth of gold, embroidered with pearls and dia-

monds, and he held in his hand a cup, made out of a single ruby, and filled with wine of a purple colour. He drew near the caliph, and, kneeling, presented the cup. The prince took it, and bore it to his lips; and, when he had drank some of the delicious liquid with which it was filled, as he returned it to the page, he perceived, to his great astonishment, that it was full to the brim. He takes it instantly again, drinks up the whole; then, giving it again to the page, in an instant perceives it full again. At this amazing incident, Haroun was perfectly astonished, and quite forgot the tree and the peacock. He asked the means by which this wonder was wrought,—"Sir," replied Abdalla, "this cup is the workmanship of a skilful magician, who knew all the secrets of nature."

He then took the page by the hand, and went suddenly out of the hall.

This was a fresh cause of displeasure to the caliph, who could hardly restrain himself from breaking into anger: however, he kept his temper, and Abdalla returned and continued to converse most agreeably with his guest till sunset, when the caliph took leave of Abdalla, and returned to his inn.

"I must own," said the caliph to himself, "that Abdalla is very magnificent; but his conduct has more of ostentation in it than generosity, for, after all, has he made me the least present, or even permitted me to examine the things I admired so much? I will not pardon Giafer the falsehood he told me, which, after all, was only intended to vex me."

Full of these reflections, he entered his lodgings; but how great was his surprise, to find waiting for him some slaves of Abdalla, with the peacock, the tree, the beautiful page, and the ruby cup. The page presented him with a roll of paper of silk, on which was written these words:—

"O! my dear and amiable guest, whose name as yet I know not, I pray thee to accept the tree, the peacock, the page, and the cup. They are your's, because you seemed to take a liking to them."

When the caliph had read this note, he was convinced that he had judged too rashly of this young man; who not only possessed a princely generosity, but so much delicacy, that he would not even present his gifts himself, but sent them to his guests, that he might avoid their thanks.

The great Haroun Alraschid was struck with

admiration,—"Oh! my good and excellent Giafer," said he, "thou hast said nothing but truth, and only meant to correct the vain glory of thy master. Ah! Haroun, vaunt thyself no more for the most generous of men: one of thy own subjects outrivals all thy magnificence."

Saying this, he returned to the house of Abdalla.—"Oh!" said he, "too amiable Abdalla, the presents you have made me are so considerable, that I fear to abuse your generosity by accepting them—permit me to return them.

"Sir," answered Abdalla, "I fear some of my actions have disgusted you, since you refuse to accept these tokens of my esteem."

"No," replied the caliph, "I am charmed with your politeness, but your presents are too costly; if I may venture to tell you my thoughts, you ought not to be so lavish of your riches, but to reflect, that they may one day fail through your generosity."

At these words Abdalla smiled, saying,—"I am overjoyed that you do not refuse my presents from displeasure. Surely you will no longer hesitate to accept them, when I assure you, that I can every day afford to give away richer presents, without the least inconvenience. This discourse

of mine, I see, surprises you; and there is something so frank and noble in your whole demeanour, that I am willing to entrust you with the history of my life, as I perceive you wish to know the reason of this profusion."

I am the son of a jeweller of Cairo: my father, who was very rich, feared that he might one day fall a sacrifice to the avarice of the sultan of Egypt; so he removed to Basra, and here I was born.

My father, who was beloved by every one for his goodness of heart, died when I was very young, and left me master of a great fortune, which I thought would never come to an end; and I lived so extravagantly, that in three years' time I had wasted my whole patrimony. I now found, too late, that I had not been at all select in my choice of friends, and that I had dissipated the fruits of my excellent father's industry on the selfish and worthless; for not one of my numerous acquaintances would even relieve me in my poverty with a bit of bread.

Of all my money I had only left one sequin of

gold: this I changed into aspres, and bought fruit, and sweetmeats, and balm of roses; with these I went every day to a shop where persons of quality resorted to drink sherbet. There I presented my basket of little merchandise (the selection of which was generally thought elegant): each took what he liked, and gave me a small piece of silver, so that by this little trade I earned an honest subsistence, without being indebted to any of my false friends.

One day, as I presented my fruits and flowers in this shop, there was in one corner of the room an old man, who escaped my attention: he called to me,—"Friend," said he, "why do you not offer some of your wares to me, as well as to others. Do you suppose I have not the means of rewarding you."

"Sir," replied I, "I do assure you that I saw you not: what I have is at your service, and I ask nothing in return." Upon which I presented my basket to him.

He took an apple, and bid me sit down by him, and then began to ask me a thousand questions, asking who I was, and what was my name.

"Excuse me, sir," said I, with a deep sigh,

"if I am unwilling to gratify your curiosity, which renews the memory of griefs that time begins to wear out."

These words put a stop to his inquiries: he changed the discourse, and, after a long conversation, when he rose to go away, he put into my hand ten gold sequins.

I was surprised at his liberality, as persons of the first rank did not give me to the amount of a sequin.

The next day I came again to the shop, and found my old man there. He beckoned me, and took a little balm, after which, he urged me so much to give some account of myself, that I could not deny; after I had put this confidence in him, he said:—

"I thought I knew your features: I was your father's dearest friend, and loved you when you were a little child, though you have now forgotten me. I have no children, nor any hopes of any, and I adopt you for my son; throw away your basket of fruit and flowers, and consider me from this day in the place of the father you have lost."

You may be sure I returned to the benevolent old man my warmest thanks. He took me to this house, where he then lived; he ordered me a

variety of rich habits, gave me plenty of pocket money, and appointed slaves to wait on me. I could have imagined my dear and indulgent father was still living, and I forgot that I ever had been in misery.

I made it my study to please the good old man, and, instead of spending my time among young men of my own age, I scarcely ever quitted him, and my good friend was pleased with my complaisance and gratitude.

In the meantime, the good old man fell desperately ill, insomuch that it was not in the power of medicine to restore him, and, now despairing of life, he ordered every one but me to leave him.

"Abdalla," said he, "I leave you master of my fortune, which, though it may seem very considerable, yet is nothing in comparison with a treasure that lies buried here, which I shall discover to you. I will not pretend to tell you how many years ago or by what means it came hither: all I know of the matter is, that my grandfather made a discovery of it before his death to my father, who in the same manner entrusted me with it, when he found himself dying.

He then acquainted me with the secret where

the treasure lay hid, and died in a few hours. I was too much immersed in grief for the loss of this second father, to trouble myself for some time with this treasure; but, when I did at last visit it, I must confess, that I was completely astonished. It is so very abundant, that it would be impossible for me to exhaust it, were I to live thrice the age of man. There is not an inhabitant of Basra but what has tasted of my bounty; my house is open to all who stand in need, and I send no one away dissatisfied. Can he be said to possess wealth who dares not use it; and can I make a better use of it than in relieving the poor, and in exercising hospitality to strangers?

When Abdalla had made an end of his adventures, the caliph, possessed with a strong desire to see the treasure, implored him to gratify his curiosity.

Abdalla seemed troubled. "This curiosity, sir, afflicts me; I cannot comply with it, without imposing conditions on you that may seem harsh."

"Give yourself no trouble on that score,"

said the caliph; "I will willingly submit to them."

"You must, then," said Abdalla, "be content to have your eyes blinded, and to let me conduct you, unarmed, with your head bare, while I hold my sabre in my hand, prepared to give you a thousand mortal wounds, if you should attempt to violate the laws of hospitality. I know very well that I am very imprudent to indulge you thus far, but you must vow secrecy, for I cannot bear to send away a guest dissatisfied."

"Let me entreat you, then," replied the caliph, "to gratify my wishes this instant, and I swear to you, I will never reveal your secret."

Abdalla then blindfolded the caliph's eyes, and led him down a narrow staircase into a garden of great extent, and, after passing through several intricate walks, they both went down into the place where the treasure was concealed.

It was a profound and spacious vault, under ground, the entrance to which was concealed by one stone. At first they went down a long narrow passage, which was so small, they were forced to creep on their hands and knees: at last, there was a bright light seen, and Abdalla bid the

caliph rise up, and pulled the bandage from his eyes, and Haroun found himself in a hall entirely lighted with carbuncles.*

A basin of marble, which was fifty feet in circumference and thirty deep, stood in the middle: it was full of pieces of gold, and round about it stood twelve pillars of gold, upon which stood twelve statues of precious stones, exquisitely wrought.

"Behold this quantity of gold: it has not yet sunk more than two inches; do you think I can ever live to consume them."

Haroun, when he had considered the basin for some time, said,—"These riches are indeed immense, but you may waste them."

"Well," replied Abdalla, "when I have emptied the basin, I will have recourse to what I am going to show you."

"This," said he, leading him onward, into another hall, more astonishing than the first, where there were several sofas of red brocade, thick-set with an infinite numher of pearls; in the

* A precious stone, seldom seen in Europe: it is of a bright scarlet colour, and, they say, emits a wonderful light in the dark.

middle was likewise a basin of marble: it was not indeed so deep or wide as the other, but then it was full of all sorts of precious stones of amazing bigness; diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, were mixed in great splendour.

Never was any one so surprised as the caliph, at the contents of this second basin. While his eyes were yet fixed on it, Abdalla pointed out to him two persons on a sofa of gold: they were laid at full length, and their bodies were so well preserved they seemed alive. On their heads were crowns of splendid diamonds, which cast a blaze of light.

"These were a prince and princess, who formerly possessed this treasure," said Abdalla, and he pointed to a table of ebony at their feet, on which were written these words:—"During a long life I have amassed together these riches. I have conquered realms, and been the most powerful monarch on earth, but at last I have yielded to death. Whoever may possess these treasures, let him make a generous use of them, to acquire friends; for when the hour comes, appointed for him to die, not all these riches can save him."

The caliph wished much to know the names of the former possessors of the treasure, but that the

inscription did not inform him. "I cannot blame you," said he to Abdalla, "for your great generosity, after I have read this inscription; but how comes it that your great wealth does not excite the avarice of the sultan of Basra, who I hear is very covetous."

"I pay him and his vizier, a large sum yearly," said Abdalla, "but I rely more on the affection of Prince Ali, his nephew and heir, who honours me with his esteem and friendship."

Abdalla then led the caliph into another hall where there were an infinite number of ruby cups, and trees with the peacocks, and many other things of as great curiosity and value.

The caliph then was blindfolded again, and led back to the house, and the next morning took an affectionate farewell of the generous Abdalla, and returned to Bagdad.

The vizier Giafer, was happy to find his master return in such good humour, and when Haroun had consulted how to reward him for his hospitality, they agreed that it could not be by rich presents, since Abdalla was so rich himself; but the caliph determined that Giafer himself should go, with a magnificient train, and invite him to

Bagdad, where the caliph would treat him with distinguished honours.

In the meantime Abdalla was suffering under the malice of a wicked wretch — the sultan of Basra's vizier; and the sultan himself had long cast an envious eye on Abdalla's riches. They knew he had found a treasure, and had tried in vain to make him discover it by fair means, and at last had recourse to a plot.

The vizier invited Abdalla to a banquet, and put a powder in his sherbet, that would make him appear to die, without really killing him. After Abdalla had seemed to fall down dead at the banquet, the vizier pretended great sorrow, and had him put into a splendid coffin, and buried in a grand sepulchre. When night came, the vizier and two of his slaves opened the tomb and took Abdalla out of the coffin; they made a fire, and chafed him all over with warm oil, Abdalla then revived. He cast his eyes upon the vizier, and, remembering him, said, "Ah, sir, for what purpose are we here?"

"Wretch," said the vizier, "thou knowest thou hast found a treasure which thou concealest from the sultan and me. Discover it, or I will inflict a thousand evils on thee."

"I am in your power to do with me what you please," answered Abdalla, "but I will not discover the treasure."

Scarcely had he ended these words, when the treacherous and cruel vizier ordered his slaves to hold fast the unfortunate Abdalla, and drew from his robe a scourge made of lion's hide, with which he lashed him so long that the unfortunate Abdalla fainted away. When the vizier saw him in this condition, he had him put into the coffin again, and returned to tell his cruel master, and to consult him what new tortures they should inflict on Abdalla.

That night some one came to the tomb and pulled Abdalla out of the coffin: he imagined it was the wicked vizier:—"Villain!" said he, "spare your vain tortures, since I will die a thousand deaths, before I will confess where my treasure is."

"Fear nothing," said a well known voice, "I come to deliver you, not to torture you."

At these words, Abdalla opened his eyes, and saw that his deliverer was his friend Prince Ali. He threw himself into his arms, and begged him to take him from that place.

"I have discovered the wickedness of my uncle

and his vizier," said the prince; "a swift steed now waits at the gate of the cemetry; fly to Bagdad; my uncle cannot pursue you thither."

He then made him dress himself hastily in a suit of clothes he had brought, and gave him a purse of gold, and hurried him away, without giving him time to thank him, so fearful was he lest his uncle or the vizier should come to the tomb.

Abdalla arrived at Bagdad in a few days; the first thing he did was to go to the bazaars and places where merchants resort, in hopes of finding out his Bagdad friend, who he thought would give him shelter for a little while; but it was in vain that he examined the faces of the different merchants; there was not one the least like his guest. Tired at last with wandering to and fro, he stayed to rest himself before the palace of the caliph. The pretty page, whom he had given to that prince, happened to be at the window, and the child casting his eyes on his master, instantly knew him. Upon this, he ran to the caliph and told him that his old master was in Bagdad, and the caliph ordered the child to go directly to him, and bring him into the palace.

The page instantly ran to Abdalla, and threw himself at his feet; Abdalla raised him, and asked

him after the merchant his master:—"I do not belong to a merchant now, sir," said the page, "I come with a message from the caliph himself, who wishes to speak to you."

Abdalla could not think what the caliph could want with him, but he followed the page without disputing his order, though he believed there was some mistake. When he entered the presence of Haroun, this prince was in a private apartment, seated on a sofa; the moment he saw Abdalla, he rose with eagerness in his looks, and caught him in his arms, before he had time to prostrate himself before him, and said:—

"Oh! Abdalla, lift up thine eyes and behold thy happy guest; it was thy caliph in whom thou placedst thy confidence, it was Haroun himself on whom thou didst bestow gifts which kings cannot equal."

At these words Abdalla, who did not dare out of respect before to raise his eyes, looking upon the caliph and knowing him again, said:—

"Oh! my sovereign lord and master! Oh! monarch of the world, was it you that came under the roof of your slave."

In speaking this he cast himself at the caliph's

feet, who raised him, and made him sit by him on the sofa.

When Abdalla told the caliph how he had been treated by the sultan and the vizier, the caliph was transported with anger, and ordered Giafer instantly to go to Basra,* and order the sultan to give up his royal power, and to proclaim Abdalla sultan, and to bring before him the sultan and his wicked vizier in chains, and he would condemn them to death, the instant they arrived in Bagdad. Abdalla then begged to be heard; he implored the caliph not to give him the crown of Basra, but to remember that it was the birthright of his generous friend Prince Ali, who had risked his life to save him from torture; he likewise asked for the life of the sultan and even of the vizier, saying, he only wished them to be deprived of the power of doing ill.

The caliph consented to his request; he dethroned the wicked sultan, imprisoned the vizier, and placed Prince Ali on the throne of Basra; and, after having royally entertained Abdalla, he sent him to Basra, with the most honourable marks of his esteem and friendship.

* The caliphs of Bagdad dethroned at pleasure their tributary princes.

THE

PUNISHMENT OF AVARICE;

OR,

THE STORY OF

THE BLIND MAN MALEK.

THE caliph Haroun Alraschid was one evening very dull and melancholy, and could find nothing that had the power of diverting him; at last he thought of amusing himself by taking a turn round the city of Bagdad* in disguise, to observe what was going forward in the streets. He summoned his favourite Giafer to attend him in his ramble, and they each put on the habit of a foreign merchant, and set out on their walk.

After they had walked some distance without

* Bagdad is situated on the eastern banks of the Tigris, in Irak Arabia; by some it was supposed to be the ancient Babylon mentioned in Scripture, but very improperly; for though, according to the prophecies in Scripture, the actual site of Babylon is unknown, yet it is known to have stood somewhere on the banks of the Euphrates, while Bagdad was built on the Tigris.

meeting anything remarkable, they came to the foot of a bridge, where they saw an old blind man, who asked their alms; the caliph, moved with pity, put a piece of gold into his hand. The blind man immediately caught hold of his hand, and stopped him. "Charitable person," said he, "whoever you are whom God hath inspired to bestow his alms, don't refuse the favour I ask you, which is to give me a box on the ear, for I deserve that and a greater punishment." After these words, he let the caliph's hand go, that he might strike, but held fast by his clothes.

The caliph, surprised at the request, said, "I cannot comply with your demand, nor will I lessen the merit of my charity by ill-treating you."

"Sir," said the blind man, "I desire you will either give me a box on the ear, or take your alms back, for I cannot receive your charity but on that condition, without breaking my solemn oath, and if you knew the reason, you would agree with me that the punishment is very light."

The caliph, not caring to be detained any longer, yielded to the importunity of the blind man, and gave him a very slight blow, whereupon the blind man instantly let him go, and thanked and blessed him.

When the caliph had got to some distance from the bridge, he said to the vizier Giafer: "This blind man must certainly have some very curious reasons for his behaviour. I should be glad to know them, therefore return and tell him who I am, and bid him not fail to come to my palace about prayer-time in the afternoon."

The grand vizier went back, bestowed his alms on the blind man, and, after he had given him the box on the ear, told him his master's order, and returned to the caliph again.

As soon as afternoon prayers were over, and the caliph was retired to his own apartment, the grand vizier brought the blind man before him.

After the blind man had prostrated himself, the caliph asked him his name: he answered, "Malek."

"Malek," said the caliph, "thy manner of begging alms seems to me so strange, that I ordered thee to come hither, to hear from thyself what induced thee to take that indiscreet oath thou hast told me of. Tell me freely how such an extravagant thought came into thy head, and don't disguise anything from me, for I will know the truth."

Malek, on hearing this, cast himself a second time at the footstool of the caliph.

"Commander of the faithful," said he, "as to the extravagancy of the action, I own that it must seem very strange to all mankind; but, in reality, it is a very slight punishment for an enormous crime I was guilty of, and for which, if all the people in the world were each to give me a box on the ear, it would not be a sufficient atonement. Your majesty will judge of it yourself, when, in telling my story, I shall let you know what that crime was."

THE STORY OF MALEK.

Commander of the faithful, I was born at Bagdad, and had a pretty fortune left me by my father and mother, who both died soon after each other. Though I was then but very young, I did not squander away my fortune in extravagance, but omitted no opportunity of increasing it by my industry. At last I became rich enough to purchase fourscore camels, which I let out to merchants, who paid me very well for the use of them.

In the midst of this happiness, and with an ardent desire of growing much richer, as I was re-

turning one day with my camels unloaded from Balsora,* whither I had carried some merchandize which was to be embarked for the Indies, midway I met with good pasturage for my camels, and made a halt there, and let them graze for some time. While I was watching them, a dervise, who had walked from Balsora, came and sat down by me to rest himself; we presently began to talk together, and at last he asked me where I was going with my camels: I told him I was returning with them, unloaded, to Bagdad, and then asked him, in my turn, whither he was travelling.

"My business," replied he, "lies at a very small distance from this place; in fact, I know of an immense treasure a little way off; so great is this mass of riches, that if your fourscore camels were all laden with gold and jewels, nobody could tell there had been any taken away."

This good news surprised and charmed me. "Good dervise," cried I, "quite transported with joy, "you are alone, and cannot carry

* Balsora is a famous city between Arabia and Persia; it stands about a day's journey from the mouth of the Tigris, which empties itself into the Persian Gulph.

much of this treasure away, show me where it is, and I will load all my camels with it, and, as an acknowledgment of the favour, I will present you with one of them."

Indeed I offered a very small matter, but my desire of riches was become so violent, that I thought the seventy-nine camels' loads I had reserved, nothing to the single one I deprived myself of.

The dervise, though he saw my avarice, was not angry, but only smiled at my unreasonable proffer.

"You know, brother," said he, "I may choose whether or no I will communicate my secret to you, or keep the treasure all to myself. But I have a proposition to make to you more just and equal than the one you have made. You say," continued the dervise, "that you have fourscore camels: I am ready to carry you where the treasure lies, on condition that when they are loaded with gold and jewels, you will let me have one half, and you take the other. You see there is nothing but justice and reason in this bargain, for if you give me forty camels, you will get, by my means, enough to purchase thousands more.—Nevertheless, it lies in your own breast whether you will agree to this or no."

I could not, without reluctance, think of parting with my forty camels, especially when I considered the dervise would be as rich as myself. But as it was no time to hesitate long on such an affair, for I must either accept of the proposal, or repent all my lifetime after of losing an opportunity of obtaining great riches, that instant I closed with the offer, and went and gathered up my camels, and after we had travelled a little time, we came into a spacious valley, the entrance of which was so narrow, that two camels could not go abreast. The two mountains which formed this valley were so high and craggy, there was no fear of our being seen by any body.

When we came between these two mountains, the dervise said to me, "Stop your camels, and make them kneel down, that we may load them the easier, and I'll proceed to discover the treasure."

I did as the dervise bade me; and, going to him afterwards, found him with a match in his hand, which he applied to a heap of sticks which he had gathered, and which he proceeded to kindle into a fire, and soon as this was done, he cast some perfume into the flames, and pronouncing some words which I did not understand, there

arose a thick cloud presently; this cloud soon separated, and then a large rock in the side of one of the mountains opened, like two folding-doors, and exposed to view a magnificent room, hewn out of the hollow of the mountain, which seemed rather to have been the handy work of genies than of men.

I could scarcely have patience to make this observation. I admired only the immense riches which I saw on all sides, and without staying a moment, like a hungry eagle seizing her prey, I fell upon the first heap of golden money that I was near to, and began to fill a sack which I held in my hand as full as I could carry it. The sacks were all large, and, with my good will, I would have filled them all, but was forced to proportion the weight to the strength of my camels.

The dervise did the same, but I perceived he had got to a heap of jewels, upon which I followed his example, and we took away more jewels than gold. At last, when we had loaded our camels, we had nothing to do but to shut up our treasures and go our way.

But before we parted, the dervise went again to the treasure, where there were a great many wrought vessels of gold, of various shapes and sizes. I observed he took out of one of these

vessels a little box of sandal wood, and put it in his bosom, but first he showed me that it contained nothing but a little pomatum.

The dervise used the same ceremony to shut the treasure as he had done to open it; and after he had pronounced certain magical words, the rocky doors folded to again, and seemed as entire as before.

Then he divided our camels; I put myself at the head of forty which I reserved for myself, and the dervise took the rest: we then parted—the dervise to go to Balsora, and I to Bagdad. We parted with many thanks, on my part, for his goodness in choosing me from all mankind to share so great a treasure.

I had not gone many paces before vile ingratitude and envy possessed my heart, and I deplored the loss of my forty camels, and coveted the riches they were loaded with. "The dervise," said I to myself, "has no occasion for all these riches, he is master of the secret of the treasure, and may help himself to as much as he pleases." So I delivered myself up to the blackest ingratitude, and determined to take the camels from him. To execute this design, I stopped my camels, and ran after the dervise.

When I came up to him, I said, "Brother, I had no sooner parted from you than a thought came into my head. You are a good dervise, disengaged from the cares of the world, and intent on serving Alla. You know not, perhaps, what trouble you have taken upon yourself, in taking charge of so many camels. You had better keep but thirty, you'll find it troublesome enough to manage them."

"I believe you are in the right of it," said the dervise, who found he was not strong enough to contend with me, "choose which ten you please, and take them in the name of Alla."

I set ten apart, and after I had turned them about, I put them in the road to follow my others. I could not have imagined that the dervise would have parted with his camels so easily; this increased my covetousness, and made me flatter myself it would be no hard matter to get the rest. Wherefore, instead of thanking him, I said to him again. "Brother, you will find thirty, or even twenty camels, as hard to manage as forty, especially as you are not used to the work. What I tell you is for your repose, and not for my interest. Ease yourself, then, of the camels, and leave

them to me, who can manage an hundred as well as one."

My discourse had the desired effect upon the dervise, who gave me, without hesitation, twenty of the remainiug camels, so that I was master of seventy, and might boast as great riches as most sovereign princes, but for all that I could not be content; for, as a person in the dropsy, the more he drinks, the more thirsty he is, so I became more greedy, and desirous of the other ten camels.

I redoubled my solicitations, prayers, and importunities, to make the dervise grant me the other ten, conjuring him to complete the obligation, and crown my joy by giving them also, which he did with a very good grace.

"Make a good use of them, brother," said the dervise, "and remember that Alla can take away riches as well as give them, if we don't relieve the poor with our abundance, for Alla makes the poor on purpose that the rich may merit by their charity a recompense in the next world."

My folly was so great, that I could not profit by such wholesome advice: I was so far from it that I was not content, though I had got my forty camels again, and I knew they were loaded with an inestimable treasure.

But a thought came into my head that the little box of pomatum which the dervise showed me, had something in it more precious than all the riches he had procured for me. I went and embraced him again, and bid him adieu, and, before I parted from him, said :—

"What would you do with that little box of pomatum? It seems such a trifle it is not worth your carrying away. I desire you would make me a present of it; for what occasion can a dervise like you, who has renounced the vanities of the world, have for pomatum?"

I wish to Heaven he had refused me that box; but if he had, I was stronger than him, and should have taken it from him by force, and not suffered him to have carried away the least part of the treasure.

The dervise, far from denying me, pulled it out of his bosom, and presenting it to me, very graciously said: "Here, take it, and be content, if I can do more for you, you need but ask it."

"Since you have hitherto been so good," said I, "I am sure you will not refuse this favour, which is, to tell me the particular use of this pomatum."

"The use of it is very surprising and wonder-

ful," replied the dervise, "if you apply a little of this pomatum to your left eye, you will see all the hidden treasures contained in the earth; but if you apply it to the right eye, it will make you blind."

I would try the experiment immediately. Accordingly the dervise directed me to shut my left eye, and he applied the ointment to it. When he had done, and I opened my eye, I saw immense treasures, and such prodigious riches, so various, that it is impossible to give you an account of them; but, as I was obliged to keep my right eye shut all the time with my hand, and that tired me, I desired the dervise to anoint that eye also.

"I am ready to do it," said the dervise, but you ought to remember what I told you, that if you put any of the pomatum on that eye, you will become blind, for such is the virtue of the ointment."

Far from being persuaded of the truth of what the dervise said, I, on the contrary, imagined that there was some new mystery which he would hide from me.

"Dervise," replied I, smiling, "it is unnatu-

ral that the pomatum should have two such contrary effects; I see you have only a mind to make me believe so."

"The thing is as I tell you, nevertheless," said the dervise; "you ought to believe what I say, for I cannot disguise the truth."

However, I imagined, that if this pomatum, by being applied to the left eye, had the virtue of showing me all the treasures of the earth, by being applied to my right eye, perhaps, it might have the power of putting them at my disposal. Possessed by this thought, instead of believing the good dervise, who spoke like an honest man, I obstinately pressed him to apply th pomatum to my right eye, but he as positively refused me.

"Brother," said he, "after I have done you so much service, I am loth to do you so great an injury; consider within yourself what a mifortune it is to be deprived of one's eye-sight."

In short, my obstinacy was so prevailing, that I continued to urge him in spite of all he could say to excuse himself. "For the sake of Alla," said I, "grant me this last favour: whatever happens, I will not lay the blame on you, but take it all on myself."

The dervise made all the resistance possible,

but knowing I was able to force him to do it, he said:—

"I will satisfy you, since you insist on it so vehemently; and thereupon he applied a little of the pomatum to my right eye, which I kept shut, but alas! when I came to open both my eyes, I could see nothing, but became as blind as you see me now."

"Ah, dervise," cried I, "what you foretold me is but too true. Fatal curiosity," added I; "insatiable desire of riches, in what an abyss of misery have you cast me! I am now sensible what a misfortune I have brought on myself! But you, good dervise, who are so charitable and compassionate, examine into the wonderful secrets you know, and see if you have not one to restore me to sight again."

"Miserable wretch!" said the dervise, "if thou wouldst have been advised by me, thou wouldst have avoided this misfortune; but thou hast thy deserts; the blindness of thy mind was the cause of the loss of thy eyes. It is true I have secrets, but none to restore thee to thy sight. Pray to God, if thou believest there is one: it is He alone that can restore to thee thy sight. He gave thee riches, of which thou wert unworthy, and takes

them from thee again, and will, by my hands, give them to such as are more grateful than thou art."

The dervise said no more, and I had nothing to reply; he left me quite confounded, and plunged in inexpressible grief. After he had gathered together my camels, he drove them away, and took the road to Balsora.

I called after him, and implored him, with the most piteous cries, not to leave me in that dreadful condition; but he was deaf to all my entreaties. Thus deprived of sight, and of all I had in the world, I should have died of hunger and affliction, if the next day a caravan returning from Balsora, had not received me charitably, and carried me to Bagdad.

After this manner I was reduced from the height of riches to beggary. I had no other way to subsist than to ask charity, which I have done till now. But to expiate my offence against God, I enjoined myself, by way of punishment, to receive a box on the ear from every charitable person that should commiserate my condition.

This, commander of the faithful, is the motive of the conduct which seemed so strange to your majesty yesterday. And if you please to add any further punishment, now you have heard the par-

ticulars of my crime, I am ready to undergo it, for I am persuaded you think this expiation too slight for such black ingratitude, both to God and man.

"Malek," said the caliph Haroun, "thy sin is great; but, God be praised, you know the enormity of it. Thou must ask the pardon of God for it in each prayer that thy religion enjoins thee to say every day; and that thou mayest not be interrupted by the care of getting thy bread, I will settle a charity on thee during thy life of four silver drachms a day, which my grand vizier shall give thee weekly."

At these words Malek prostrated himself before the caliph's footstool, and, rising up, departed, loading him with thanks and blessings.

THE

INJURED VIZIER.

THE vizier Covaschende had been falsely accused to his master, the sultan of Khovassan, and, though perfectly loyal and upright in his conduct, was, without due examination of the charges brought against him, thrown into prison by the sultan's orders. He was enclosed in a gloomy dungeon, and only allowed bread and water for his subsistence. In this dismal abode he remained for seven years. At the expiration of that period, the sultan chanced to pass the palace of his injured minister, in the disguise of a dervise. To his great astonishment, he saw a crowd of domestics busy in opening and cleaning it. On inquiry, he found they were preparing the apartments for the reception of their master, who had ordered them, by a messenger from the prison, to put everything in order, since he should shortly be released by

the sultan, and return to his house. The sultan was perfectly astonished at this intelligence, since, so far from intending to set the unfortunate captive at liberty, he had almost forgotten there was such a person in existence. He could not help thinking that his long confinement must have deranged the intellects of the unhappy Covaschende, who, in a fit of madness, had fancied that his deliverance was at hand. He determined, however, to go to the prison, disguised as he was, and speak to the vizier. Having purchased a quantity of bread and cakes, he went to the gaoler and asked his permission to distribute his charity among the prisoners. The man granted his request, and after he had visited several cells, he came, at length, to the dungeon of the vizier, who was earnestly employed at his devotions, which he suspended at the entrance of the supposed dervise, and inquired his business.

"I come," said the disguised sultan, to "congratulate you on your approaching deliverance; for I have heard the happy tidings from your servants; yet I fear they are mistaken, since the sultan has not yet given orders to that effect to the gaoler."

"That may be true, charitable dervise, but

nevertheless, I am convinced that before night I shall be restored to my sultan's favour and my lost dignity."

"I wish it may prove so," replied the sultan; "but I should like to know on what grounds you build so improbable an expectation."

"Be seated, my friend," said Covaschende, "and I will inform you. I have always observed that the height of prosperity is ever followed by a reverse of fortune, and the depth of adversity by sudden consolation. When I was the happy favourite of my prince, whose honour and advantage were the constant objects of my care (and for whose welfare I have never ceased to pray, even from the depths of this gloomy dungeon), I happened to be one evening taking the air in a sumptuous barge on the river. As I was drinking some coffee, the cup that I held in my hand, which I highly prized, being made of a single emerald of immense value, fell into the water. I immediately sent for a diver, to whom I promised a great reward if he should be able to recover my treasure. The diver desired me to point out the spot where I supposed that I had lost the cup. As I did so, a rich diamond ring that I had on my finger fell into the river. While I was blaming my own

carelessness at this double loss, the diver made a plunge into the river, and in two minutes reappeared with the coffee cup in his hand, and to my great surprise, I found my ring within it. I amply rewarded the diver, and was exulting in the recovery of my jewels, when the thought struck me that such uncommon good fortune must be soon succeeded by a sudden reverse. My forebodings proved but too true, for that very night my enemies accused me falsely of treason to the sultan, who believed the charge, and the next day I was hurried to this dismal dungeon, where I have languished seven years with only bread and water for my support. The Almighty has, however, given me resignation to his decrees, and this day an accident has happened which makes me confident of a speedy restoration to the sultan's favour. This morning I felt an earnest desire to taste a bit of meat. The gaoler, softened by my entreaties and long sufferings, brought me a ragout, on which I prepared to make a delicious meal, but while, according to custom, before eating, I was making my ablutions, imagine my vexation, when two rats who were quarrelling together, fell from a hole directly into the dish of meat. The disappointment nearly amounted to agony, and I could

scarcely refrain from tears; but in the midst of the poignancy of regret, the beams of hope darted on my soul. I reflected that, as imprisonment and misfortune had succeeded my overflowing height of prosperity, so, by reasoning in the same manner, I concluded that this disappointment (that was the lowest degree of misery to which I could be possibly reduced) would be followed by sudden good fortune. In this persuasion, I prevailed on the gaoler to send word to my servants to prepare my palace for my instant return."

The disguised sultan felt every word of this discourse impress him with a complete conviction of the innocence of his injured minister. He had the greatest difficulty to restrain his feelings and maintain his assumed character, but not wishing that his visit to the prison should be known, he presently retired.

On his arrival at his palace he instantly commanded Covaschende to be released, sending at the same time a robe of honour and a splendid retinue to conduct him to court.

When he entered the royal presence, the sultan received him in the most gracious manner, restored him to his former dignity, and condemned to death his malicious accusers. He then conducted him

to a private saloon, where falling on his neck, he embraced him, with tears in his eyes, and implored him to forgive his past cruelty. After acknowledging his visit in disguise to the prison, he bestowed on him many marks of favour, and permitted him to return to his own palace.

END OF VOL. I.